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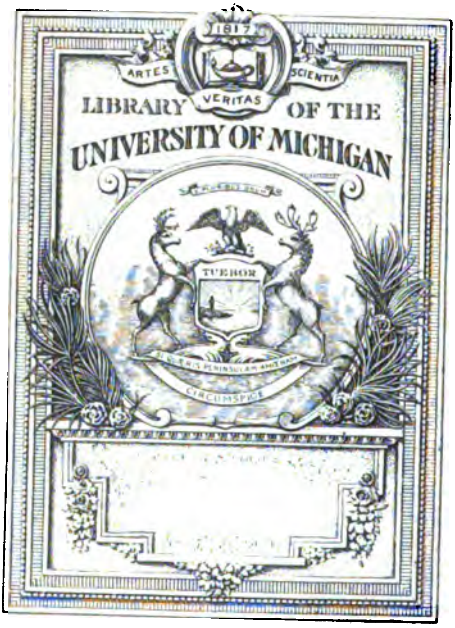

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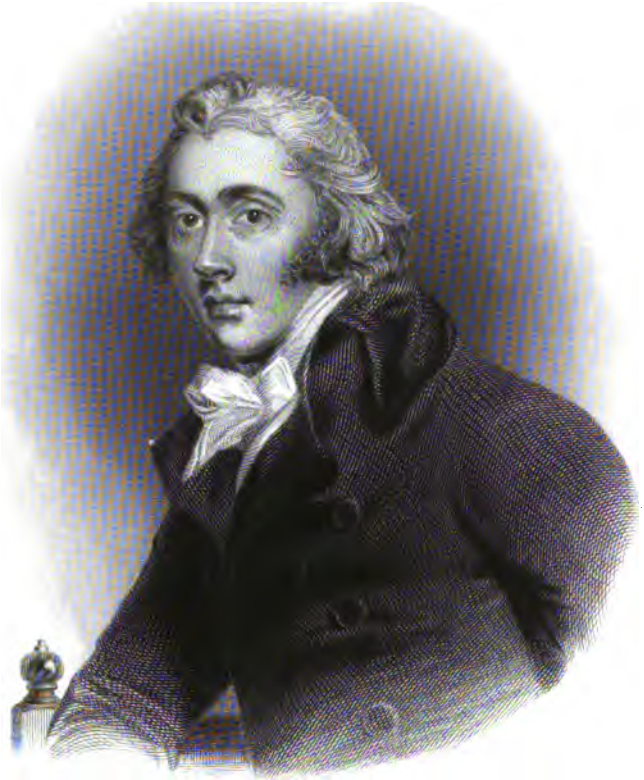

Engraved by A. Heath.

The Right Hon. Charles Grey,
Viscount Howick, Baron and Earl Grey, K.G.

London Hurst and Blackett 1856.

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MEMOIRS

OF THE

COURT OF ENGLAND,

DURING

THE REGENCY,

1811—1820.

FROM ORIGINAL FAMILY DOCUMENTS.

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MEMOIRS

OF

THE COURT OF ENGLAND

DURING

THE REGENCY.

CHAPTER I.

[1813.]

EFFECT OF NAPOLEON'S DISASTER, IN GERMANY—LORD CASTLEREAGH AND HIS DIPLOMATIC CORPS—PRUSSIA, SWEDEN, AND AUSTRIA—CHANGES IN THE ADMINISTRATION—THE NEW MINISTRY AND THEIR DIFFICULTIES — POSITION OF THE OPPOSITION — THE GRENVILLE PARTY—THE MONOPOLY OF THE EAST INDIA COMPANY—DEATH OF THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM — HIS CHARACTER VINDICATED — THE PRINCE REGENT APPOINTS HIS HEIR LORD-LIEUTENANT OF BUCKINGHAMSHIRE.

MEMOIRS
OF
THE COURT OF ENGLAND
DURING
THE REGENCY.

CHAPTER I.

FEARFUL as had been the overthrow of Napoleon, subsequently to his retreat from Moscow—so strong was the dread his name inspired among the German sovereigns, that they absolutely did not dare to encourage the spirit of their people, who demonstrated their desire to take advantage of this terrible disaster, and establish their independence. Indeed, the King of Prussia absolutely went the length of denouncing the act of his own commander, General Yorck, who had entered into a convention with General Diebitch to abandon the cause of the French Emperor with the entire force under his orders, which had formed a portion of the invading army; and, as a further proof of his subserviency, proposed a marriage of the Prince Royal of Prussia, with a Princess of the Bonaparte family, and an increase of the Prussian contingent in the service of the Emperor of France, to sixty thousand men. Rarely has pusillanimity produced a more striking example.

The Emperor of Austria was generally believed to be equally dependant upon Napoleon, and having the interest of a daughter to maintain, shrunk from any hostile manifestation that might injure the country of which she was Empress, and her son the Heir Apparent. His chief object in the crisis, seemed to be to make a merit of continuing his alliance with France, to obtain territorial advantages with French assistance.

"We will compromise the British ministry in the eyes of the nation," promises the Austrian Minister, Count Otto, to his French correspondent, Marat, "and take upon ourselves the whole blame of failure."[1] Servility could not go beyond this. The smaller German States crouched in much the same trembling attitude. Their fear was only exceeded by their insincerity. Fortunately for the cause of Europe, the nation appeared everywhere in advance of its government, and in England there existed an able minister, who watched with the most earnest intentness the turn of this important game, and played his part in it with a skill that made the most of every advantage, till the vast interests that were at stake, were secured beyond the possibility of forfeiture.

The historical student, who desires to possess a thorough knowledge of these subtle manœuvres, should carefully read the Correspondence of Lord Castlereagh, with the various ministers he had accredited to the principal Courts of Europe.[1] Among those who played a prominent part in the important negociations then being carried on, were General Lord Cathcart, who represented the Court of St. James's at St. Petersburg; Lord Aberdeen at Vienna; Major-General Sir Charles Stewart, (father of the present Marquis of Londonderry,) employed on a particular mission connected with the armies in the North of Europe, which he accompanied, and subsequently, on more than one occasion, performed essential services. Mr. Edward Thornton at Stockholm; Sir Henry Wellesley in Spain; Lord William Bentinck in Sicily, and Sir Charles Stuart (Lord Stuart de Rothsay) in Portugal, and subsequently in France. It is scarcely possible to exaggerate the difficulties which lay in their paths. The principal Powers of Germany halted between two opposing influences—their dread of Russia and of France, and while they were promising their support to the one, they were as prodigal of their assurances of assistance to the other.

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[1] "Fain," I., 292.

Although Bernadotte was Crown Prince of Sweden, he was a Frenchman, and was strongly suspected of entertaining French sympathies, totally at variance with his professions of co-operation with Russia. He aimed at driving a bargain with England, and wanted Norway as the price of his joining the coalition against his old master. The latter, however, was quite as well aware of his being in the market, and made it known at Stockholm, that he intended retiring from the military command of his Empire, in favour of his old friend and comrade, and for the future, would content himself with the direction of its civil government.[1] Under these circumstances, Mr. Thornton found the Crown Prince extremely difficult to deal with, and so he continued nearly throughout the campaign.

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[1] "Correspondence, Despatches, and other Papers of Viscount Castlereagh, second Marquis of Londonderry," Vols. VIII. and IX.

With Prussia, satisfactory arrangements were not more easy. That government was as greedy as it was timid, and one of the ministers (Count Golz,) suggested to Sir Charles Stuart, when at Berlin, the propriety of bribing the officers who were in command of Prussian fortresses. "He stated that none of the commanders, to his knowledge, would be proof against large offers, and argued how desirable it would be, if England could assist them in this way." The answer of Sir Charles Stuart was worthy of the Court he represented. "I stated that I conceived such measures on the part of Great Britain, wholly out of the question; that if the allied armies could drive the French over the Rhine, the fortresses would not long hold out; that we had but one object to look to now, which was to annihilate Bonaparte by force of arms, and not by treachery or gold."[2]

The Emperor of Austria was quite as much the slave of his fears, as his royal brother of Prussia; he could not be got to commit himself by taking any decided step against his good brother the Emperor Napoleon, and continued to forward to Paris the most convincing proofs of his cordiality. How all such obstacles were gradually removed, the apprehensions of each sovereign allayed, and the bonds of their union against the common enemy, riveted by abundant supplies and the most liberal subsidies from England, may be ascertained by a reference to the volumes just quoted. It is only necessary to add that the favourite pupil of Pitt proved himself worthy of his great master, and realized the grand scheme for the confederation of Europe against Napoleon, which they had studied together in 1805.[1]

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[1] "Correspondence, Despatches, and other Papers of Viscount Castlereagh, second Marquis of Londonderry," Vol. VIII., p. 338.

[2] "Castlereagh Despatches," Vol. VIII., p. 379.

The changes which had been made in the Perceval Administration do not appear to have been either very numerous or very striking, but they were evidently not made without full consideration, for several months elapsed before the government took its permanent shape.[2] When, however, we look closely into these apparently unimportant shiftings of ministers, it will be found that if the result did not secure the right man for the right place, it achieved the closest approximation to it that could have been produced under the circumstances.

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[1] "Castlereagh's Despatches," Vol. VIII., p. 356.

[2] The appointments were gazetted in the following order: *May* 25.—The Earl of Buckinghamshire, Chancellor of the Duchy and County Palatine of Lancaster. *June* 8.—Earl of Liverpool, Right Hon. Nicholas Vansittart, Sturges Bourne, Esq., and the Hon. Berkeley Paget, Commissioners for executing the office of Treasurers of the Exchequer; Right Hon. Nicholas Vansittart, Chancellor and Under Treasurer of the Exchequer. *June* 11.—Earl of Harrowby, Lord President of the Council; Lord Bathurst and Lord Sidmouth, two of his Majesty's Principal Secretaries of State. *June* 25.—Right Hon. Charles Bragge Bathurst, Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, *vice*

The prominent changes consisted of Lord Liverpool for Mr. Spencer Perceval, which was an improvement, inasmuch as the former enjoyed a larger share of the confidence of his colleagues, was regarded by the nation with more satisfaction, and was as much the superior of his predecessor in ministerial capacity as in rank. Lord Liverpool had been Secretary for War and the Colonies, a post now filled by Lord Bathurst, who, like Lord Liverpool, had exhibited considerable ability in other offices. The last post his Lordship had vacated, President of the Board of Trade, was taken possession of by Lord Clancarty, who afterwards distinguished

the Earl of Buckinghamshire resigned. *August* 15.—Earl of Yarmouth, Lord Warden of the Stannaries. *September* 1.—Earl of Buckinghamshire, Viscount Castlereagh, Earl Bathurst, and Viscount Sidmouth, Secretaries of State; Robert Peel, Esq., Chief Secretary for Ireland; Earl of Liverpool, Right Hon. N. Vansittart, Baron Teignmouth, Viscount Lowther, Right Hon. J. Sullivan, and Lord Apsley, Commissioners for Affairs in India. *September* 29.—Earl of Clancarty, President of the Board of Trade, and Master of the Mint; Viscount Melville, First Lord of the Admiralty. *October* 3.—Earl of Liverpool, Right Hon. N. Vansittart, Right Hon. William Fitzgerald (Chancellor of the Exchequer of Ireland), Hon. Berkeley Paget, Right Hon. Frederick John Robinson, and James Brogden, Esq., Commissioners for Executing the Office of Treasurer of the Exchequer; Hon. J. Robinson, Treasurer of the Navy. Subsequently Earl Moira was made Governor-General of India.

himself as a diplomatist. Mr. Nicholas Vansittart, (subsequently known as Lord Bexley,) a steady, careful man of business, became Chancellor of the Exchequer. Lord Harrowby, an honest statesman was raised to the dignified post of President of the Council, which Lord Sidmouth had vacated to become Home Secretary, in place of Mr. Ryder. Lord Buckinghamshire superseded Lord Melville as President of the India Board, while Lord Melville displaced Mr. Yorke as first Lord of the Admiralty. The following maintained their places: Lord Eldon as Lord Chancellor, Lord Westmoreland as Lord Privy Seal, Lord Mulgrave as Master-General of the Ordnance, Duke of Richmond as Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, and Viscount Castlereagh as Foreign Secretary. The latter was a most judicious appointment, and could not have been improved.

In the constitution of this Administration, there were no elements of discord in the towering superiority of a subordinate, or the notorious inferiority of a chief. The successor of the Marquis Wellesley could boast of ministerial capacity of quite as high an order, while it was much more practical, from greater official experience; but so opposed was his nature to display, that his previous colleagues had never given him credit for the resources he possessed. In a very little time, he proved that a more accomplished statesman had rarely entered a Cabinet, and the stability Lord Liverpool's Administration enjoyed, was due, as much to the interest and affection with which Lord Castlereagh inspired his coadjutors, as to the conscientious discharge of duty, of which he continued to set them an admirable example.

A secure foundation was gained by the Cabinet leaving Catholic Emancipation an open question; this enabled those who were favourably disposed to the consideration of a measure of relief, to wait till the country was better prepared for its discussion.

The state of affairs, either at home or abroad, was not such as promised tranquillity to either of the ministers. The Secretary for the Home Department found himself daily getting deeper into a spirit of rural incendiarism and disaffection; the Secretary at War appeared likely to be overwhelmed with the extent and unpromising nature of his labours; his coadjutor for the Colonies was disturbed by the hostilities of the United States, as well as those of the French Emperor; while the even more heavily burdened Secretary for Foreign Affairs had to feed and strengthen a European coalition against a domination that had set nearly a million of armed men in motion, to destroy the principal governments of the world. With increasing discontent at home, and war raging in both the Old and New Worlds, the Administration appeared to have before them the united labours of Atlas and Hercules; but strong in union, and in a desire to prove themselves worthy of the confidence of their Royal patron, each applied himself to the duties of his department with a spirit that shortly rendered them invulnerable to the most fierce assaults of Opposition.

And what was the position of their rivals? In a great degree, little better than a combination of political guerillas; divided into bands more or less independent of discipline, and carrying on hostilities with hardly any reference to a plan or a commander. Nominally they were led by Lords Grenville and Grey; but not only did a considerable portion of their Parliamentary force act without their authority, but it daily became more evident that the views of the two leaders were as divergent as their followers. Lord Wellesley and Mr. Canning were equally in opposition; but were little to be relied on as subordinates, and had not sufficient influence to take the command. As for the Grenville party, it has been proved how thoroughly disinclined they were for office, under the present unpromising circumstances. But in course of time, it became as evident that they were equally disinclined for opposition. What feelings could they have in common with Sir Francis Burdett? And how completely antagonistic must have been their principles, to those of Cobbet and "Orator Hunt." It may, therefore, easily be imagined, that the able statesmen of the family whose liberality of opinion could not be brought to harmonize with license, gradually withdrew themselves from the political arena; sharing less and less in the contests of party, except on those great questions to the advancement of which they stood pledged.

The Marquis of Buckingham, with failing health, remained at Stowe, where he received intelligence from his faithful correspondents, of the progress of events, with a decreasing interest in whatever related to party politics. Lord Grenville attended more regularly to the interests of his University than to those of his reputed partisans. Mr. Thomas Grenville withdrew a large share of his attention from the noisy combinations of men, to the peaceful study of books. While Lords Temple and Nugent gave up a considerable portion of their time to the cultivation of a literary taste, in which both brothers had already displayed prominent talent. They left to the ambitious members of their party a more active participation in the struggle for honours; and of these, Charles W. Williams Wynn, and William Henry Fremantle, took an advanced position, which, in due time; attracted towards them the attention of the Government.

The first communication refers to the monopoly of the East India Company, whose charter was about to expire.

LORD GRENVILLE TO EARL TEMPLE.

Dropmore, January 10, 1813.

MY DEAR TEMPLE,

I did not receive the enclosed time enough to send it you before. It will explain the point on which you wish to be informed, but if you have any idea of making any use of it, I can furnish you with a much more particular statement.

I saw in the papers that you had given some notice on the Spanish question, but I could not distinctly make out what it was. I hope you do not rely too much on the statements made *exparte* Wellesley, because, though I believe it is true that the Ministers have even in their own view of the subject, greatly mismanaged that cause, yet I do not think the particulars at all striking enough to make much impression in Parliament, in answer to the common argument of "We did all that circumstances and means enabled us to do, and Lord Wellington does not complain."

I hear that there is a notion of Government being to split on the East India Question, and that Carlton House, which I can most readily believe, has taken fright at the first appearance of resistance in the city, and is now loud against your friend, Lord Buckinghamshire.

I am sorry to see so much disposition in our party to join in with the Company, merely as antagonists of Government for the moment, and to support the claim of the Company and the city, to monopolize half the trade of the empire—

1. In their own way as mere politicians, and looking at the question merely in a party light, I think a worse calculation never was made, than that of making common cause with the East India Company and the City, against the whole body of merchants and manufacturers of England, to say nothing of Ireland.

2. If we take this course, the Government will be ready enough to take fright, to give up everything to the Company, to throw the odium on us for defeating the wishes of the manufacturers, and to return to that very active commerce of jobs and mutual support between Downing Street and Leadenhall Street, which is, in fact, the only successful trade the Company ever has carried on. To labour in their favour is to co-operate in the establishment of devoted, powerful, and perpetual opponents of our whole system of politics.

But 3rdly, I hope we shall view the question on something of a more enlarged scale, and on principles a little higher than the temporary object of party politics, and I am confident that in this view there never was a measure less suited to the real interests of a country than would be the renewal, at this moment, of the Company's monopolies, either of trade or of government.

We are not called upon, certainly, just at this moment to express any opinion on these questions. But when it does come before Parliament, which must probably be directly after the holidays, my disposition will be to maintain as I think I can prove :—

1. That the plan of the Earl of Buckinghamshire is perfectly futile and inadequate to its own professed objects, and that if adopted (leaving, as he proposes, everything else nearly in *statu quo*) it could do no more than bait a trap for the certain ruin of every private merchant who engaged in such a speculation.

2. That the claims of the Company and City to a continuance of the commercial monopoly, is inconsistent with every principle of political economy, with justice to the people of England, and with good faith to Ireland.

And 3rdly, that the subject must of necessity require a much more extensive consideration, and much larger change in Government as well as trade, than appears, as yet, to have been in the contemplation of either party.

To enlarge on all this, would be to write a volume.

I wish you would give me the opportunity of talking it all over with you before the campaign opens. When in town, one has leisure for nothing.

Parliament renewed proceedings on the 3rd of February, but nothing remarkable was brought forward in either House for several days. An event now occurred, which for a considerable time completely absorbed the interest of the Grenville section of the Opposition; this was the death of the Marquis of Buckingham, which took place on the 11th,—a loss no less heavy to his country than to his family, for few men have ever attained the elevated position to which he had raised himself, with such legitimate claims to national admiration and respect. Born, it may be said, with hereditary pretensions to the highest offices of the State, he proved that he possessed claims as a statesman, which must, with such recommendations, have placed him in the front rank of the servants of the Crown. The duties he fulfilled, called for distinguished qualifications, and these were so fully displayed, under very trying and embarrassing circumstances, that they obtained the recognition of his sovereign in a manner equally gratifying and honourable. There is no doubt, that after Earl Temple had returned from the government of Ireland, that of Great Britain was, to some extent, at his disposal. Indeed, he held the Seals of Secretary of State for three days. The confidence which the King placed in him, whilst striving to emancipate himself from the shackles with which Lord North's coalition with Mr. Fox had trammelled the royal dignity, would have been taken advantage of by an inferior mind, but Lord Temple was a statesman of a different order to Lord Sidmouth and Mr. Perceval, as may easily be proved by comparing their conduct under analogous circumstances. Lord Temple having, throughout an extremely embarrassing crisis, acted with singular tact and judgment, and succeeded in emancipating the King, made way for his friend, Mr. Pitt, without seeking the slightest advantage for himself. He not only refrained from stipulating with those who had reason to be most grateful for his assistance, for an adequate share of the honours he threw open to them, but finding an unexpected obstacle in the way of his preferment, with quiet dignity stepped back into private life, and appeared to care for nothing beyond the customary acknowledgment of his services during his Vice-Royalty in Ireland.

It has been stated on eminent Whig authority, that Mr. Pitt "committed a great fault in accepting office as the price of an unworthy intrigue."[1] A distinguished writer has acknowledged, "This allegation is wholly inaccurate."[2] His statement of the inaccuracy is, however, almost as inaccurate as the allegation. There would be great difficulty in proving the "clandestine transactions between Lord Temple and the King;" or in establishing the "intrigue" in which Lord Temple and Mr. Pitt are said to have participated; and there was no discrimination of the people between the two ministers. Lord Temple having successfully effected an honourable mission on his own responsibility, voluntarily retired from the scene. If not rewarded at the moment of success, as he should have been, it was not from a sense of anything clandestine or intriguing in his recent proceedings, in the mind of his sovereign, but in consequence of the arts of a baffled and defeated coterie to raise a clamour against the author of their humiliation; and from motives highly characteristic of his nature, he declined to embarrass the King by attaching to a new administration that eminently required popular support, a coadjutor who had drawn upon himself the intense hostility of a still formidable popular party. Nor is it true, as the reviewer affirms in another page, that the part Lord Temple had taken, "utterly disqualified him for a leading share in the Government."[1] His conduct could not have affected, in any way, his ministerial qualifications; indeed, the display he then made of judgment, courage, and constitutional knowledge, in a period less easily influenced by prejudice, must have readily procured him the highest official honours.

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[1] Lord John Russell's "Memorials and Correspondence of Charles James Fox."

[2] "Quarterly Review," Vol. XCVII., p. 579.

But Lord Temple's merit was not limited to a performance of his allotted part, according to the ordinary and established reading. His intelligence threw a new light upon the text, which gave to his interpretation of it a more comprehensive meaning than it had hitherto obtained. He was one of the first among practical statesmen who looked upon the policy of governing as the means of social happiness and prosperity; and when he found one section of the United Empire disunited from the rest by a barrier of humiliating restrictions, his liberal spirit recognized the apparent injustice, and laboured incessantly for its removal. It would answer no purpose now, to insist that such inequality of legislation was either the natural consequence, or the presumed remedy of grave social evils. Lord Temple beheld, as he believed, an innocent people suffering for the sins of their fathers, and felt satisfied that the time was come when it must be as safe to admit them to the privileges of nationality, as he considered it just. His politics were considerably in advance of his age; therefore, it cannot be considered strange that he lived to witness so few of the ameliorations he had advocated. One, perhaps the most important of his social improvements, he had the happiness of seeing in operation—the Abolition of Slavery in the British Dominions; and the pleasure this grand scheme of human advancement created, must, in some measure, have recompensed him for his disappointments in another direction.

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[1] "Quarterly Review," Vol. xcvii., p. 575.

Whatever may be the reader's opinion of these political ideas, it is impossible to withhold from them the praise of sincerity and disinterestedness. There cannot be a question that, both when Earl Temple, and when Marquis of Buckingham, he sacrificed his interests to his principles. Had he proved as pliable as those who did not possess a tithe of his endowments, and abandoned the cause of clients who could not afford him the slightest service, his ministerial career might have been as long as Walpole's, and his fame rivalled only by that of Chatham. He, however, prided himself upon being a faithful scholar in the school of Pitt, whose policy he maintained, even when it had been abandoned by his master.

The Marquis of Buckingham put forth no pretensions to brilliant qualifications. He was not to be ranked with those political meteors that flash upon the horizon, and sink below it before their effulgence has exhausted popular admiration. He was brilliant in his hospitality, his generosity, and his benevolence. His liberality towards the exiled family of France was on a scale altogether unparalleled—of which the princely manner in which they were entertained, and actually supported by him, formed only an inconsiderable item. With regard to members of his own family, his obligations found no limits but their inclinations; and as to his personal friends and dependants, his zeal in forwarding their interests, was equally indifferent to labour and expense.

Faults have been pointed out in greater men, therefore, we shall not attempt to make out for him a title to perfection, either as a man, or as a politician. His chief failing was a jealousy of his influence, which rendered him irritable when he fancied encroachments on his dignity. This was, on some occasions, a source of discomfort to himself; but his heart was so warm, and his principles so sound, that no evil could result from this failing, beyond the transient unpleasantness it excited within his own immediate circle.

Earl Temple succeeded to his father's title and also to his political influence. It may be remembered by a reference to a preceding work,[1] that Lord Temple had been, not very long since, on terms of confidential intimacy with the Prince of Wales, who had also been the friend and guest of his deceased father. This his Royal Highness condescended to remember, and was graciously pleased to forward, through his Minister, the accompanying evidence of interest.

THE EARL OF LIVERPOOL TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM..

Fife House, February 16, 1813.

MY LORD,

I am commanded by the Prince Regent to convey to you, his Royal Highness's sentiments of concern and regret, upon the occasion of the death of your father, the late Marquis of Buckingham, for whose memory his Royal Highness will always entertain the most sincere respect.

I am, at the same time, to inform you that his Royal Highness has been pleased to approve of you as successor to your father, in the situation of Lord Lieutenant of the county of Buckingham.

I have the honour to be, my Lord,
Your Lordship's most obedient humble servant,
LIVERPOOL.

Whatever may have been the amount of opposition given by the Grenvilles to the Peninsular War, it did not affect the regard which the new head of the family had long entertained for the illustrious General under whose direction it had been carried on; for, when the former wrote to congratulate Lord Wellington on having been selected to receive one of the most treasured distinctions of the late Marquis, his death had restored to the Crown, the communication was accompanied with the warmest professions of attachment. It elicited the following characteristic reply.

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[1] "Court and Cabinets of George III."

LORD WELLINGTON TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Freneda, April 25, 1813.

My dear Lord,

I have received your letter of the 10th of March, and I assure you, that I am highly flattered by your recollection of me, at such a moment as that at which you wrote to me, and at the expression of your wish that the friendly and affectionate intercourse, with which I had so long been honoured by your much respected father, should be continued with yourself. I assure you that, from regard to yourself, and respect for your whole family, as well as from affection to the memory of your father, I am most desirous that the loss which I have sustained in him should not be aggravated by the discontinuance of my intimate intercourse with yourself and family; and I accept, with the utmost satisfaction, the offer of your continued friendship.

I am much obliged to you for your congratulations upon the recent honour which his Royal Highness, the Prince Regent, has conferred upon me, which is enhanced much to me, by its having been worn by my old patron and friend. Pray, present my best respects to Lady Buckingham.

Believe me to be, &c.,

Wellington.

CHAPTER II.

[1813.]

THE WHIGS SUPPORT THE CAUSE OF THE PRINCESS OF WALES—THE PRINCESS PUBLISHES A LETTER ADDRESSED TO THE PRINCE REGENT—HER PRINCIPAL ADVISERS—THE GRENVILLES DO NOT COUNTENANCE HER ROYAL HIGHNESS'S PROCEEDINGS—POPULAR AGITATION RESPECTING THE PRINCESS—MR. WHITBREAD, HER PRINCIPAL ADVOCATE IN PARLIAMENT—MR. FRANCIS HORNER'S CONNECTION WITH THE GRENVILLES—MR. CANNING DISBANDS HIS PARTY—ROYAL SPEECH ON THE OPENING OF PARLIAMENT—MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM OFFERS THE SERVICES OF HIS REGIMENT FOR HOLLAND.

CHAPTER II.

It was time for the Grenvilles to disavow the tactics which the Whigs had now resolved to employ. Some of their most influential members had taken up, purely as a weapon of offence, the cause of Caroline, Princess of Wales. This most imprudent lady had learnt nothing from the difficulties out of which she had escaped, but a desire to get into others of a more objectionable character. Startling as are the facts Lord Malmesbury brought to view,[1] from Lady Charlotte Campbell, who was constantly in her private society, and entrusted with many of her unpleasant secrets, we are obliged to believe that either her royal mistress was so totally unworthy, as to be perfectly indifferent to her position as a wife, a mother, and a princess; or that she affected to be regardless of social distinctions and feminine decency, merely as a means of annoying her husband.[2] It is scarcely possible to say which is most offensive, the criminality, or the hypocrisy. And this perversity was displayed, let it be remembered, when her daughter, on the verge of womanhood, with the prospect before her of the government of a powerful empire, stood almost alone and unadvised, in the midst of a circle that was anything but exemplary.

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[1] See Appendix to the preceding volume.

[2] "Diary of the Times of George IV." 4 vols.

The Princess of Wales, thus circumstanced, seems, for some time, to have been regarded as a great instrument in the hands of an Opposition leader; but it so happens, that Opposition leaders occasionally become members of Government; and as they found it impossible to carry her Royal Highness with them into the Administration, they left her to their successors on the Opposition benches. In this manner, a rising lawyer, Mr. Spencer Perceval, had taken up the cause of the Princess, when he had no better employment, and became a most zealous advocate of her "rights," and a stern denouncer of her "wrongs." In course of time, however, he was content to throw up his brief, as holding it was incompatible with his duties to the person he had hitherto been assailing, in whose service he had now entered—the adviser and advocate of the Princess, became the equally indefatigable adviser of the Prince. But when her Royal Highness was lamenting this event, another rising lawyer, superior in talent to the deserter, came forward to take his place at her councils. This was soon after the death of Mr. Perceval, and when it became certain that the Opposition leaders were not either to supersede or assist his colleagues.

About the middle of January, a letter startled the lieges, from the columns of the 'Morning Chronicle,' addressed by the Princess of Wales to the Prince Regent; and it transpired that this communication had been previously sent to the Prince through more than one official channel; and on each occasion, had been returned to the writer unopened, his Royal Highness declining to receive it. It also became known, about the same time, that the Princess, not satisfied with employing an editor of a newspaper to attack the Prince Regent, which she afterwards disavowed, had, as it is stated in a previous page, announced a publication of private letters, with the same intention of increasing the scandal respecting her relations with her husband and daughter.

The letter in the 'Chronicle' was of the same specious character as all preceding documents from this source—professing the forbearance of a "guiltless woman," and complaining of her separation from her daughter, as an intolerable trial to her feelings as a parent, and an especial injury to the character of a beloved child. Towards its termination, the writer recommends that the young Princess should no longer be prevented from "commencing her intercourse with the world;" and, as if to proffer both bane and antidote, she entreats that her daughter may enjoy "the benefit of confirmation."

The proper place of this epistle was a newspaper, every line having evidently been studied with a view to its effect on public opinion; and to enable certain popular orators to debate in Parliament, upon the first opportunity, on the injustice of depriving a mother, influenced by such admirable sentiments, of the society of her only child. A section of the Opposition thought her case afforded them that political desideratum, "a good cry;" and it is said that Whitbread, Brougham, and, subsequently, Canning, among her Royal Highness's numerous counsellors, were continually urging the Princess to bring forward her imaginary grievances in every way in which they might be made to excite public sympathy, and embarrass Ministers.

In this coterie—very much to their credit—the Grenville party refused to appear. In the delicate inquiry that had taken place a few years before, in Lord Grenville's house,[1] he must have become acquainted with quite enough to satisfy so clear a mind, as to the amount of her culpability; and, although he joined in pronouncing a verdict which acquitted her Royal Highness in one part of the charge, it was quite as decisive as to her guilt, on another.

There were powerful reasons against their giving a more decided verdict—the penalty being *death*; and the offender nearly related to their sovereign. But the evidence, if insufficient in a legal view, to establish High Treason, was morally so damnatory, that the friends of the Princess, when they superseded the

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[1] "Court and Cabinets of George III.," Vol. IV., p. 45. See also Report to the King, signed by Lords Grenville, Erskine, Spencer, and Ellenborough, July 14, 1806.

Ministers who had authorized the inquiry, avoided publishing their Report.

Ever since Lord Grenville and his family had been in Opposition, they had been equally careful in keeping aloof from the Opposition Court at Blackheath. It mattered little to any of the Grenvilles, in what questionable shape the royal lady chose to entertain her leisure, or in how indignant a tone she thought proper to agitate for her marital rights; she was neither client nor patroness of theirs, and therefore they left her to her ordinary sources of amusement and instruction.

At the begining of April, a bill which had passed the Commons, for the repeal of the act of William III, that makes stealing to the value of five shillings, a capital offence, was brought forward in the Lords: when as Sir Samuel Romilly affirmed, "For strength of reasoning, for the enlarged views of a great statesman, for dignity of manner, and force of eloquence, Lord Grenville's was one of the best speeches that I have ever heard delivered in Parliament."[1] Despite of such support, and the Christian necessity of such an amelioration of our criminal code, the Bill was thrown out.

The Princess kept up the agitation she had commenced in the newspapers; which appears to have induced the Prince Regent, with the advice of his Government, to institute another delicate enquiry. It may be remembered that when the Grenville administration was superseded, their successors, some of whom ranked among the warmest friends of the Princess, in a minute, April 22nd, 1807, while confirming the decision of the four Lords, as regards the innocence of her Royal Highness, went the length of impugning it, where it pronounced her guilty. This, of course, was a great encouragement and signal triumph, to her and her partizans, and as several of the subscribers to this document were members of the existing Privy Council, who were now to conduct the enquiry, the Princess had reason to imagine that they could not be brought to stultify themselves, by promulgating a different judgment. Under this impression, she boldly addressed a letter to the Speaker of the House of Commons, on the 1st of March, complaining of a Report[1], she had heard that this new Court of Enquiry had presented to the Prince Regent, and with the usual professions, threw herself upon the wisdom and justice of Parliament, and demanded a full investigation. This produced the intended effect. Mr. Cochrane Johnstone, on the 5th, brought forward a motion, or rather a couple of motions, respecting her Royal Highness, and in the course of the speech, in which he introduced them to the House, averred he was ready to prove that the letter of the Princess to the King, on the 9th of October, 1806, in answer to the report of Lord Grenville and his coadjutors, was dictated by Lord Eldon,

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[1] "Diary of his Parliamentary Life," Vol. III., p. 95.

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[1] The substance of it was to advise his Royal Highness, that the intercourse between the Princess of Wales and the Princess Charlotte, "should continue to be subject to regulation and restraint."

Mr. Perceval, and Sir Thomas Plumer.[1] Mr. Whitbread, her confidential adviser, made an animated speech midst shouts of applause; in which he made the most of the inconsistency of ministers; but Lord Castlereagh and Sir Samuel Romilly defended the appointment of the Commission, and despite of some stirring appeals, the motion fell to the ground.[2]

The Report of the Privy Council, though very guarded, proved that Lord Grenville's was unassailable—the Minute of his successors in the Government, notwithstanding—but so far from this rendering the Princess more prudent, it only made her more turbulent.

In the beginning of April, the City was successfully agitated, and addresses were presented to her Royal Highness, by the Sheriffs, and by the Lord Mayor, Aldermen, and Livery, expressive of the highest admiration, and the deepest sympathy; to which most gracious answers were returned. On the 15th, there was a Public Meeting in Palace Yard to discuss the same subject, which also ended in an address; and on the 28th, another address from the Corporation of London, followed by half-a-dozen from different places.

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[1] No notice of this charge is taken by Lord Eldon's biographer either in 1806 or 1813; but probably the effect it produced on the Prince Regent is described in a letter from his Lord Chancellor, written apparently at this time, in which he mentions that "The Prince has been treating me with so much unkindness." The "Diary of George IV." does not commence till 1810. A curious anecdote respecting Lord Eldon and the Princess of Wales, is preserved in Romilly's Diary, Vol. III., p. 104.

[2] "I cannot but wonder at the extraordinary success which has hitherto attended the bold, and what at first seemed the rash steps which the Princess has taken. The publication of the depositions, taken in 1806, *would not, I think, fail to destroy her reputation for ever* in the opinion of the public; and yet she has repeatedly called for the publication of them. The ministers dare not produce them, because, by so doing, they would condemn themselves; and as they were not produced, she has, in the opinion of the public, the advantage of having it taken for granted that they would put her innocence beyond all question. Brougham is her adviser, and, hitherto, it must be confessed, that his advice has been completely successful.—" Diary of Sir Samuel Romilly," Vol. III., p. 86.

Mr. Whitbread lost no opportunity of bringing forward the cause of his client in the House of Commons. He made an enquiry on the 15th of March, whether the Douglas's had been prosecuted. On the 17th, he presented a petition from Sir John and Lady Douglas, to permit them to re-swear their depositions before a tribunal, where they would risk a prosecution, if they could be proved to have sworn falsely. His diatribe on this occasion called forth, on the 22nd, eloquent denunciations by Lord Ellenborough, Lord Grenville, and Earl Spencer, of the gross falsehoods that had been published with reference to the part they had taken in the enquiry. But there were "more last words" to be said by Mr. Whitbread; and, on the day after, he endeavoured to set himself right with the House, for the false accusations he had brought forward; but he had no supporter but Sir Francis Burdett.

Nothing daunted by his failure, on the 24th of March, on a motion for an address of condolence to the Prince Regent, on the death of the Duchess of Brunswick, he and his friends endeavoured to obtain the consent of Parliament to an address to the Princess, and failed. On the 31st, he brought forward a motion on the same subject, and withdrew it. He afforded a respite to his audience, till the 27th of May, when, on the Chancellor moving for a select committee to consider the charges of the Civil List, he pressed upon Ministers the necessity of increasing the income of the Princess—with the usual result. At last, Mr. Whitbread appears to have taken the hint; for, from this date to the close of the Session, he did not venture to mention her name in Parliament.

These were very small fruits in the way of agitation; for the production of addresses to the Princess, and the organization of public meetings to discuss her wrongs, had ceased; and the politicians who had so warmly taken up her cause, becoming satisfied that, as a weapon of offence against the government, it could produce no effect in their favour, began to take so little interest in her affairs, that her Royal Highness could scarcely avoid coming to the conclusion, that for party considerations alone had her complaints been encouraged.

The fact was, matters of more importance kept continually presenting themselves to the public attention during the year 1813. The disasters of Bonaparte in the Russian campaign, the events of the war with the United States, the great parliamentary discussions that animated the Session, Wellington's signal victory at Vittoria, and the Austrian declaration against France, turned the popular mind in other directions. The Princess lost ground, and the Prince gained it.

Among the rising men of the day, few attracted more attention than Francis Horner, and having attached himself to the Grenville party, it was natural that the more influential members of the family should be disposed to assist his views. In the previous year, Lord Grenville had offered to assist him in obtaining a seat in Parliament, which he thankfully acknowledged, and with this object, there had been an interchange of notes between him and Mr. W. H. Fremantle, in March. With Lord Grenville, of whom he expressed an earnest admiration, he was also in friendly communication, as is evident from the following.

MR. FRANCIS HORNER TO LORD GRENVILLE.

Lincoln's Inn, July 22, 1813.

My dear Lord,

I flattered myself it would have been in my power to avail myself of your Lordship's kindness, by asking me to Dropmore, and that it would have been in my power to have proposed a visit to your Lordship, before going the circuit, but I have been so much occupied, that I shall be under the necessity of setting out for the West of England without having that gratification.

A singular political event, and one not very intelligible, was announced last night, that *Canning has formally, and with some solemnity, disbanded his party*; telling the gentlemen who have been his supporters during the Session, that they may, for the future, consider themselves unengaged; and that he is no longer to be regarded as their head. Ward says they are all turned adrift upon the wide world; but as he has stayed a year in his place, he thinks himself entitled to a good character from his master. He had his discharge from the mouth of Canning himself, the day before yesterday; and the same notification was made to Mr. Robert Smith, yesterday. The only other circumstance I have yet heard connected with this, is that Wellesley Pole has been complaining very much that Canning did not bring matters to bear with the Ministry, and that he is now considered, both by the Marquis, his brother, and by Canning, as perfectly free to do what he can in that way for himself. Whether this is a deep measure on the sudden effect of some ill humour; and whether Canning, in reducing his establishment thus abruptly, points towards Government or Opposition, I have heard nothing yet that enables me to guess. But very erroneous ideas these men must have of party connexion, or, indeed, of political morality, who consider their parliamentary association as held together, and as dissoluble without any reference to opinions.

I dare say your Lordship will receive from others a more correct and particular account of this occurrence; but it is so odd a one, *and so much deserves to be well understood and watched,* that I have taken the chance by my report of it, of contributing to give your Lordship a full account.

I beg you will present my compliments to Lady Grenville,
And am ever, my dear Lord,
Most sincerely and faithfully yours,
F. Horner.

It will presently be shown that the writer was correct in his surmises and suspicions. It was, "a deep measure." It "pointed to Government."[1]

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[1] A letter, dated July 26, from Lieutenant-Colonel Allan to Lord Sidmouth, throws a little light on this transaction.—"Life of Lord Sidmouth," Vol. III., p. 107.

LORD GRENVILLE TO MR. FRANCIS HORNER.

Dropmore, July 25, 1813.

My dear Sir,

It is a great disappointment to us not to have the pleasure of seeing you before you set off for the west. I hope you will make this place in your way on your return, if you possibly can.

Living in a time of strange events, yet I have been seldom more surprised than by that which you mentioned in your letter. What I most lament in it is, the discredit which it throws on all party connexion, the upholding which, on its true foundation of public principle, I take to be essential to the benefit of a parliamentary constitution. Otherwise, the mere fact of a party being thus dissolved, shows abundantly it could exist to no good purpose. How Pole is to come into office I do not well understand, as his pretensions are said to be so high. Canning, if he is to be had singly, would, I suppose, be a very desirable acquisition indeed, to a government so unusually weak as this is, in House of Commons debate.

Ever, my dear Sir, most truly yours,

Grenville.

P.S. I have been not a little surprised by the Speaker's speech, if we are to take the newspaper report of it as correct. Does your recollection furnish you with any instance of a Speaker remarking to the Throne on motions made, but rejected in the House of Commons? How is the King (or Prince Regent) to know that such matters passed there, and by what authority has the Speaker to assign grounds of such decisions?

The speech which had excited these remarks, and which created considerable surprise in other quarters, was delivered by the Speaker, Mr. Abbot (Lord Colchester), and referred to the Catholic Question in terms totally different from the opinions professed by Lord Grenville, and his friends.

In the Autumn of 1813, the aspect of affairs abroad attracted the serious consideration of the more reflective Whigs. Their opposition to the war in the Peninsula had its foundation in the apparently hopeless character of the contest—campaign passing after campaign, in which a brilliant victory was almost sure of being followed by a retreat, always disheartening, sometimes disastrous; and England appeared to be drained of her resources, to assist a people whose civil and military chiefs were more inimical than the enemy; but since Lord Castlereagh's accession to the Cabinet, such support had been sent to Lord Wellington, and such arrangements had been entered into with the principal continental powers, opposed to the ambition of the French Emperor, that a most important change had been effected, equally adverse to him in Germany and in Spain.[1] The Russian war had been a terrible blow to Napoleon; but, immense as had been his loss in the dreadful retreat from Moscow, the energy of his character, stimulated by the necessity that existed for bringing forward all his military resources to crush the nationalities which that disaster had encouraged to rise against him, shortly brought him again into the field, with an army almost as powerful as the one he had lost. A spirit, however, had been excited among the peoples against which he then marched, that neither his genius nor his resources—great as both still were—could again subdue; and the prospect that opened to Europe, in consequence of the vigour of the resistance the great conqueror now encountered, was observed with intense satisfaction by all genuine patriots in England—by none with more real pleasure than by Lord Grenville. A letter written by Francis Horner to John Allen, dated 25th October, 1813, conveys the impression made on a congenial mind, by this favourable change. "Your account of the view which Lord Grenville is expected to take of continental affairs, in a speech upon the first day of the Session, has relieved me from an anxiety which I felt on that subject; for I have had fears that we were to make the same false step respecting this German war, that has been so fatal to the party, and deservedly so, with respect to the Spanish cause. That the financial difficulties of the country will be increased by our embarking so deeply with the Allies, as I think we ought to do, is true, and ought not to be disguised; that the sanguine expectations professed by the friends of Government, of a speedy settlement of the affairs of Europe, have apparently no just foundation, in the present aspect of them, ought likewise, in my opinion, to be stated. But I cannot hesitate now in believing that the determination of the French military force, and the insurrection of national spirit in the north of Germany, form a new conjuncture, in which the Whigs ought to adopt the war system, upon the very same principle which prompted them to stigmatize it as unjust, in 1793, and as premature, in 1803. The crisis of Spanish politics, in May, 1808, seemed to me the first turn of things in a contrary direction; and I have never ceased to lament that our party took a course so inconsistent with the true Whig principles of continental policy, so revolting to the popular feelings of the country, and to every true feeling for the liberties and independence of mankind. To own that error now, is a greater effort of magnanimity than can be asked for; but the practical effects of it will gradually be repaired, if a right line of conduct is taken with respect to German affairs."[1]

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[1] It is hard to say whether the alacrity of the nation in submitting in the twentieth year of the war to fresh burdens, or the boundless generosity with which supplies of every sort were sent to the insurgent nations of Germany, or the efforts made to strengthen the victorious army of Wellington in Spain, or the diplomatic activity which hushed separare interests, and reconciled jarring pretensions in the conclusion of the alliances with cabinets, were most worthy of admiration.—"Alison's History of Europe," Chap. LXXIX.

The Whigs were certainly in a false position regarding the war in the Peninsula. They ought to have been in opposition, not to the war, but to the mismanagement that had for so long a period made it appear a waste of blood and treasure. Lord Castlereagh's interposition falsified all their predictions from such data, and gave to their unfavourable representations, a factious and partizan appearance. He equally disappointed them with respect to the present war. His promises of a "speedy settlement of the affairs of Europe," which they derided, were fulfilled to the letter. The extraordinary activity displayed by this able pupil of Pitt, in the present great crisis, can only be fairly estimated after a careful perusal of his diplomatic and ministerial labours during the spring and summer, which led to the treaty of Stockholm, March 3, with Sweden; of Reichenbach, June 14, with Prussia; of Peterswalde, July 6, with Russia; and, finally, the incorporation of Austria with the Grand Alliance, July 27. These were magnificent results—very different from the abortive schemes of his predecessor, whose genius for the higher offices of government was much more liberal of blossom than of fruit. But the inspiration displayed in these conventions with powerful and rival states, was equalled, if not excelled, by that which directed the plan of a joint armament against the still formidable enemy of all. Intellectual, as well as moral resources, on a colossal scale, were demanded in a decisive conflict with that brilliant genius; but the mind that had enabled Wellington to deliver, at Vittoria, a final blow at French dominion in the Peninsula, was equal to the task of suggesting to the Generals of the Allies, a plan for the liberation of Germany from the same domination. It is not surprising, therefore, that the friends of Government should have entertained sanguine expectations of the speedy and successful issue of this gigantic war. Peace was much nearer at hand than Mr. Horner would bring himself to believe.

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[1] "Horner's Memoirs and Correspondence," Vol. II. p. 157.

Parliament met on the 5th of November, with the usual forms, and an extremely encouraging speech from the throne, delivered by the Prince Regent. It mentioned the great triumph at Vittoria, and the subsequent march to the Pyrenees, under the command of Field-Marshal the Marquis of Wellington; the victories of our allies, the Austrians, over the French in Silesia, Calne, and at Denevitz; the repulse of the Americans in Canada; and it expressed assurances that the spirit which had animated the Portuguese, Spaniards, and Russians, would soon be found to stir the heart of Germany. A remarkable confirmation of their truth had already been given by the Prussians under Blücher, aided by their allies, who, in the preceding month, had met the French under Napoleon, at Leipsic, and driven them back with heavy loss. The Emperor of Russia entered Frankfort the day after the Prince Regent delivered his speech, the Emperor of Austria on the following day, the King of Prussia shortly after, and the allied forces were marching in immense force towards the French frontier.

On moving the address, there was a remarkable unanimity in both Houses—the Marquis Wellesley, speaking in the highest terms, of that and the royal speech; and Lord Grenville declared his entire concurrence in their sentiments and language. He trusted that no peace would be concluded which did not restore *a balance of power* in Europe. In the Commons, Mr. Whitbread expressed his cordial approbation. In short, everywhere existed harmony, praise, and triumph. Events of great gravity were crowding upon each other almost too rapidly for separate notice. Lord Wellington and his brave companions in arms had entered France on one side, while the allies were advancing on another. All Napoleon's friends among the German potentates had abandoned his fallen fortunes; the Confederation of the Rhine was dissolved, and efforts were being made to restore the royal government to Holland. It was at this crisis that the Marquis of Buckingham made the proposal that elicited the following communication from his uncle.

LORD GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Dropmore, Nov. 26. 1813.

I am most truly grateful and delighted by your letter, which I have just received, and it would have given me the greatest pain if my absence from town could have been the occasion of your delaying, even for an hour, a step which does you so much honour personally, and in which all who are connected with you must feel a pride. Had I been on the spot, I could only have expressed my full and warm concurrence in the step which your own right and honourable feelings have prompted you to take, and which, if taken at all, would have lost much of its grace and credit by any, even the smallest delay.

It must be an additional gratification to you to reflect how wholly you are following, in this instance, the steps of your dear father, and that as he was the first to set the example of carrying his Militia to Ireland, when danger threatened us in that quarter, you have now been the first to offer to accompany them to Holland, for the purpose, I hope, of fully discharging the debt of honour and gratitude, which our country owes to that people.

May God prosper you in all your undertakings, and enable you at the close to look back throughout on a life spent as his was.

My heart is too full of these recollections, to talk to you of coming incidents.

Yours, most affectionately,

G.

As no opposition was made by the French to the return of the Prince of Orange to the throne of Holland, and that country was almost entirely free of foreign domination, the desire of the Marquis of Buckingham, though approved of by the Government, was not in this instance gratified. His military ardour, however, as will presently be shown, was not damped by this disappointment.

LORD GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Dropmore, December 24, 1813.

I send you such an answer as you may show to Sir G. Lee. It contains the exact truth on the subject.

I hear this morning from my brother, that Bonaparte has notified to the Senate his acceptance of the basis of negotiation proposed by the allies. I do not wonder that Castlereagh is in a fever about it. My brother says that he is setting out for Mannheim; and certainly that is his only chance of having any finger in the pie.

As to terms of peace, I am as little disposed as any one to approve of a disgraceful or insincere termination of the contest. But, alas! the decision is not with us. If we cannot get the allies to continue the war for us, and with us, we cannot (I am not afraid to affirm it again, after all the boasting we have heard on the subject) we cannot hold either Spain or Holland for one campaign. We may, indeed, draw ourselves into our own shell, and hold our colonial conquests till we are bankrupts; but as for the peace of Europe, it depends on Austria, not us, and sorry I am to think from all I know of that Court, or from all I have heard of it even lately, this power could not be placed in worse hands.

If Lord Castlereagh does not make haste, I am confident he will find a separate peace signed. If he comes in time to put his name to it, that I fancy will be all the share he will have in it, except the honour of buying Holland or Italy with the best part of our conquests.

It will, however, be a great disappointment to me to think that you are not going to Holland, to fight for King William the First, between whom, and King Louis, or Emperor Napoleon, I cannot see, as far as justice is concerned, the slightest difference.

Lord Castlereagh was in ample time, and executed his mission most creditably.

Scarcely any notice had latterly been taken of the Princess of Wales. Her advisers appear to have become a little ashamed of her; and even her zealous friend, Mr. Whitbread had been obliged to give her Royal Highness a hint that she ought to appear in public more decently clothed;[1] but the publication, in the "Morning Herald" and "Morning Post" of the depositions taken before Lord Grenville and his colleagues, had, as Sir Samuel Romilly anticipated, affected her reputation seriously with the thinking part of the community. The Princess began to be dissatisfied with her advisers, and strove to revenge herself for her ill-success, by disturbing the relations that existed between the Prince Regent and the Princess Charlotte.

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[1] "Diary of the Times of George IV.," Vol. I., p. 254.

CHAPTER III.

[1814.]

LORD CASTLEREAGH AT BAR-SUR-AUBE—THE POSITION OF THE ALLIES—THE CAMPAIGN IN FRANCE AGAINST NAPOLEON—THE WAR WITH THE UNITED STATES—INDISCRETION OF THE SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS—LORD GRENVILLE'S OPINION RESPECTING HIS CONDUCT—LORD CASTLEREAGH'S OBJECTIONS TO THE TREATY OF PARIS—THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM EMBARKS FOR FRANCE IN THE COMMAND OF HIS REGIMENT—THE SPEAKER REPRIMANDED—THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM AT BORDEAUX — CONSULTS LORD WELLINGTON — HIS REPLY—VISIT OF THE GRAND DUCHESS OF OLDENBURG TO STOWE—LORD GRENVILLE ON THE STATE OF FRANCE AND ENGLAND.

CHAPTER III.

The judgment and enterprise of Lord Castlereagh, which had given a decided impulse to the war in the Peninsula, and had successfully organized the grand coalition against Napoleon, was now to be directed to matters equally important towards effecting the great object the Allied Powers had in view, and to insure this, he approached as closely as possible the scene of the stupendous drama, the last act of which had just commenced. His first appearance as a negociator, and counsellor, was at a conference held at Bar-sur-Aube, at the house of General Knesebeck, consisting of the Sovereigns of Russia, Austria, and Prussia; the Princes Hardenberg, Volkousky, Schwartzenberg, and Metternich; Counts Radetsky and Nesselrode, Baron Diebitsch, Lord Castlereagh, and the General, in whose sick room it was held. It took place at a critical period of the campaign—February 25th, 1814, when the Emperor of France, attacked by the allies, in the heart of his own territory, had caused them to suffer important reverses, by a succession of skilful demonstrations worthy of the best days of his brilliant career: and the object of the coalition was further menaced by the indecision of two of its most important members—the Emperor of Austria, and the Crown Prince of Sweden; the first being influenced by his sympathies, as father of the Empress of France, the other, by his feelings, as a Frenchman, the comrade and *protégé* of her husband. Under such influences, both hung back, when their active co-operation was most wanting, and by their evident disinclination to make the position of Napoleon desperate, they caused no slight embarrassment to their colleagues.

At the conference of Bar-sur-Aube, Lord Castlereagh, who was regarded by every member, as the main-spring of the combination, appears to have had two points of extraordinary delicacy to manage: the one, to satisfy the Emperor of Austria, that as far as was consistent with the prosperity of France, the rights of his Imperial daughter, and her child should be respected, whatever might be the fate of her husband—the other, that the large military force commanded by Bernadotte, should be so reduced as to diminish the risk of his being false to the cause, whilst the withdrawal from his command of the corps of Winzingerode, Bulow and Woronzoff, to reinforce Blücher, would enable this bold commander to oppose Napoleon with a fair prospect of speedily marching upon Paris. His representations had great weight with the council, and they were backed by arguments there was no possibility of resisting.

The Earl of Ripon, in a letter to the Marquis of

Londonderry,[1] thus describes the position of the parties. "From Napoleon's central position between the armies of Blücher and Schwartzenberg, he was enabled to fall seperately with his main strength upon each of them singly; and experience had proved that neither of them was adequate to withstand his concentrated efforts. Blücher's army was much inferior in number to Schwartzenberg's, and the thing to be done, was to reinforce Blücher to such an extent, as might insure the success of his movements. But where were these reinforcements to be found? There was nothing immediately at hand but a body of Russians, under St. Priest, who were on the march to Rheims, to join the corps to which they belonged in Blücher's army, and they were manifestly insufficient for the purpose. But there were two other strong corps: one of Prussian, under General Bulow, one of Russian under, Winzingerode, who were on their march into France from Flanders, and might be brought forward with decisive effect. They belonged, however, to the Crown Prince of Sweden, who had not at that period, I think, crossed the Rhine; they were under his orders, and he was very tenacious of his authority over them; and when it was suggested that the only mode of adequately reinforcing Blücher, was by placing these corps at his disposal without a moment's delay, the difficulty of withdrawing them from Bernadotte's command, without a previous and probably tedious discussion with him, was represented by a great authority as *insurmountable*.

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[1] Father of the present Marquis.

"Lord Castlereagh was present when this matter was discussed at the council, and the moment he understood that, militarily speaking, the proposed plan was indispensable to success, he took his line. He stated that, in that case, the plan *must* be adopted, and the necessary orders *immediately* given; that England had a right to expect that her allies would not be deterred from a decisive course, by any such difficulties as had been urged, that he boldly took upon himself *the whole responsibility* of any consequences that might arise, as far as regarded the Crown Prince of Sweden. His advice prevailed. The battle of Laon was fought successfully, and no further efforts of Bonaparte could oppose the march of the allies to Paris, and their triumphant occupation of that city. It is not then too much to say, that the vigour and energy displayed by Lord Castlereagh, at this crisis, decided the fate of the campaign."[1]

The grand drama of Napoleon was drawing to its close. On French soil, he had resolved to concentrate all his energy, and call up all his military genius, to withstand the enemies who still pursued him. The campaign of the spring of 1814 displayed his talent as a Commander in a very brilliant light; but, though he proved that his skill had not diminished, the difficulties by which he soon found himself surrounded, were insurmountable. The fiat had gone forth; France became weary of pouring forth her best blood, to cement the lofty structure of his ambition; and the nationalities he had insulted and oppressed, were pressing eagerly on his steps, stimulated by the remembrance of their wrongs, and the certainty of their revenge.

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[1] "Castlereagh Correspondence," Vol. I., p. 129.

Closely as the Russians, the Prussians and the Austrians were enveloping the defeated Emperor and his diminished hosts, on one side of France; more closely was Wellington and his allies investing his best General, Soult; and the aspect of his affairs everywhere foretold his speedy overthrow.

The result of the war with the United States, if not so satisfactory, was at least decisive. Their invasion of Canada had proved a miserable failure, attended with ignominious defeat, and heavy loss; and though we endured losses at sea, wherever the opposing force had not been vastly superior, the British Flag had never been disgraced. In the gallant conflicts between the 'Guerrière' and the 'Constitution'; between the 'Macedonian' and the 'United States,' and the 'Java' and 'Constitution,' the disparity was enormous; and in the equally gallant action between the 'Frolic' and the 'Wasp,' there was a considerable advantage in the United States' ship sloop. The result in these cases betrayed the folly of the Admiralty at home, in making no provision to meet the advantages our enemies had been carefully preparing before war was declared.

Parliament did not meet at the usual time; and in the interval, political parties had time to consider their tactics for the ensuing campaign. There was, however, very little to contend about—the spirit of rejoicing at the successes in which the nation had largely shared, and the deep interest with which the close of the great contest was watched, threw all minor differences into the background.

One subject, however, commanded the attention of politicians. The observations in which the Speaker of the House of Commons had thought proper to indulge, again became a source of severe animadversion from the leaders of Opposition.

LORD GRENVILLE TO MR. FRANCIS HORNER.

Dropmore, February 7, 1814.

MY DEAR SIR,

My notion is, that the Speaker's speech ought to be considered simply as a breach of privilege, on the constitutional ground which you mention; and according to the old doctrine that the Speaker has neither eyes to see, ears to hear, nor tongue to speak, but as the House commands.

The question of discretion I should myself disclaim, saying distinctly that if I thought the Speaker had any such discretion to exercise, though even then I should think this a very *indiscreet* use of it, yet I should by no means wish the House to interpose with any censure of a mere error in judgment, however glaring. But, if we are right in our view of the case, it is absolutely necessary to declare, for the purpose of the future maintenance of the privileges of the House of Commons, that they have not intrusted to their Speaker any discretion to communicate to the throne, in presence of the Lords, any part of the proceedings of the House, other than such as have been brought to that state in which they are constitutionally and necessarily, and by order of the House itself, so communicated.

In this view of the case, a proper course, I think, would be, to begin by a resolution, simply declaratory of the law of Parliament, and privilege of the House of Commons in this respect. Nor do I see that in any case, whether of the passing or rejecting of this resolution, it could be necessary to follow it by any vote directly applying this rule to the conduct of the Speaker. In such a case, prevention is the proper object to be professed, and to be pursued : and this will, I think, infallibly be obtained by such a motion, in whatever manner it may happen to be disposed of at this moment.

The wording of such a motion would require some care and attention, to be quite sure that the privilege is correctly and accurately stated; and on this subject, it is probable that Charles Williams Wynn, who has, I doubt not, looked carefully through the precedents, can give better advice than any body else. For the argument, however, it is obvious that, in this way of treating the subject, precedents are of much less importance, because the Speaker's speeches not being properly matter of record, it was natural, and indeed unavoidable, that slight breaches of the rule should pass unnoticed; and it is not until the violation of it is gross and flagrant, that it attracts attention. This is the case with almost every other privilege of Parliament. The daily and habitual breach of these, in slight cases, is never understood to prejudice in the slightest manner, the rule of privilege itself, which remains in the breast of the House to exercise and assert to its full extent, whenever the occasion requires it. In the present case, it may easily be shown that the violation is such as if wholly unnoticed, must destroy the privilege itself.

I confess I doubt whether the matter has hitherto been taken up and spoken of, in quite as high a tone as its importance requires; if it be as I really believe, the greatest *direct* violation of the *independence* of the House of Commons that has been attempted, I might say for a century and a half. By independence, I do not, of course, mean its right of free action, with which this matter has no concern; but its right of separate, distinct, and *uncommunicated* proceeding. It is far less in degree, but in principle, exactly similar to the case I alluded to at the begining of this note—the case of the five members.

Ever most truly yours,

Grenville.

Scarcely had Parliament commenced, when it became obvious that an attack upon their imprudent Speaker was intended by the leaders of Opposition. On the 30th of March, Mr. George Ponsonby gave notice, that Lord Morpeth intended a motion on the subject, on the 22nd of April; and some severe remarks were then expressed by Messrs. Ponsonby, Tierney, and Whitbread, by way of foretaste of what was intended.

The series of events that brought the allied Sovereigns to Paris, are sufficiently known. Less familiar, however, is the unsleeping vigilance and anxious care of the able Minister who watched over the interests of the English Government, to nourish the alliance, and prevent the unsteady members of it from affecting its stability, either by the influence of their vanity or ambition. On the 11th of April, was signed the Treaty of Paris—greatly to the dissatisfaction of Lord Castlereagh, who objected strongly to the dethroned Napoleon possessing the sovereignty of an island so near the theatre of his most brilliant achievements;

and intimated the probability of a renewed struggle to regain his departed greatness, which might again convulse Europe. His warnings were unheeded, and his anticipations regarded with indifference.

An appointment was made about this period that gave general satisfaction in England. Writing, on the 21st of April, from Toulouse, to Viscount Castlereagh, Lord Wellington says: "Your brother Charles [the late Marquis of Londonderry] has just given me your letter of the 18th; and I am very much obliged and flattered by your thinking of me for a situation for which I should never have thought myself qualified [the Embassy to Paris]. I hope, however, that the Prince Regent, his Government, and your Lordship, are convinced that I am ready to serve him in any situation in which it may be thought that I can be of any service."[1]

The Marquis of Buckingham could not be brought to stifle his military yearnings. He had taken great pains with his regiment since he had succeeded to the command: and it was in a remarkable state of efficiency. He made another proposal to the Government. It was to join Lord Wellington, and assist in the operations against Soult, and in giving the *coup-de-grace* to Napoleon. This time his services were accepted, and his regiment was ordered to embark for the south of France. Unfortunately for his desire to distinguish himself, events followed each other so rapidly, that before he reached his destination, the conflict was over. His uncle's letter will give the reader a sufficient idea of what was going forward.

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[1] "Despatches," Edited by Colonel Gurwood, Vol. xi., p. 668.

RIGHT HONOURABLE THOMAS GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

April 12, 1814.

My dear Lord Buckingham,

The very favourable course of East Wind must have given you a short and easy passage to Bordeaux. You yourself will, I know, regret that you will find little or nothing to be done at your arrival. The capture of Paris, on the 30th; the vote of the Senate, declaring Bonaparte "dechu," and his formal consent of the 6th, to retire into the island of Elba, with a pension for himself and his family, closes the whole of this disastrous scene, and leaves you nothing to do, but to buy what Claret you want, and to return through Paris, as soon as you have leave, if you prefer that course to the accommodations of your yacht.

We are illuminating for the restoration of Louis XVIII., who, though full of gout and infirmity, is expected in town this day, and will go very soon to Calais, in the Royal yacht, accompanied by his Royal Highness the Admiral of the fleet. The news of the day is, that Monsieur was to be at Paris on the 9th. This fortunate solution of our long and heavy difficulties, gives very universal and heartfelt satisfaction, except to the three or four whose language upon this subject has so little corresponded with either your sentiments or mine, or those of the country. I hear that Lord Castlereagh had reached Basle on his return to England from Dijon, but that he had been overtaken, and was to be at Paris on the 8th or 9th.

You will be very glad to hear that Stanhope is made an extra aide-de-camp to the Duke of York, and that he will very shortly receive pay as such, in the room of Windham; besides the certainty which this gives of his getting a company in the Guards.

I had an opportunity, the other day, of repeating to the Duke of York the high sense that you entertained of his obliging and gracious manner to you on the subject of your battalion; he spoke of you in terms of the highest praise, and was kind enough to give me the first intelligence of the downfall of Bonaparte. I hope, under these circumstances, our Ministers will not lose the opportunity of hitting Mr. Maddison a hard knock, to rouse him into a better sense of the necessity of peace. What could Pellew do better than to sail direct to the Chesapeake, and tell Mr. Maddison the fate of his friend Napoleon?

Lord Spencer's two marriages of son and daughter, take place on Wednesday and Thursday.

I enclose a letter from Mr. Shipley, as I believe. God Almighty bless you—that you should have the credit of this enterprise, without the chances of war, is perfect in my eyes, though not in yours.

On the 22nd of April, Lord Morpeth brought forward his motion respecting the Speaker's transgression. It was thus expressed: "That a special entry be made in the Journals, that it be not drawn into precedent for any Speaker to inform his Majesty, either at the bar of the House of Lords, or elsewhere, of any proposal made to the House by any of its members, or to acquaint the throne with any of the proceedings thereupon, until the same shall have been consented to by the House."

Mr. Abbot made a very long speech in his own defence; but this was so little satisfactory to his opponents, that Mr. Whitbread proposed this stringent amendment—"That Mr. Speaker, in the speech he addressed to the Prince Regent at the bar of the House of Lords, *was guilty of a violation of the trust reposed in him, and a breach of the privileges of the House*, of which he is guardian and protector."[1] The debate is graphically noticed in the following letter, among the various subjects there dwelt upon.

RIGHT HONOURABLE THOMAS GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Cleveland Square, April 23, 1814.

My dear Lord Buckingham,

We have just heard of the 'Hyperion' and Co. having been seen off Brest, all well, on the 9th; which intelligence was made still more welcome, because it seems to put you out of the possibility of being a party to the reported loss by a sortie from Bayonne, on the night of the 13th, in which Hope is said to be wounded and taken, and Hay and Sullivan killed. But as this was only a report at Passages on the 14th, we still hope it is not true. Paris papers, however, state a battle near Toulouse, in which great loss was said to be incurred on both sides, though the French were driven out of Toulouse.

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[1] "It was, perhaps, a more gentle reproof than his conduct deserved. In the debate, however, which took place on it, he was treated with great severity. It was, indeed, a debate of a very novel character. The Speaker seemed fixed in his chair only to be reprimanded for six hours together by every member successively that chose. The resolution was lost by a majority of 274 to 109."—See Sir Samuel Romilly's "Diary," &c., Vol. iii., p. 133.

It seems quite incomprehensible that Bonaparte's resignation of the 4th, to the Senate of Paris, should not be known at Bordeaux and Toulouse, for ten days after. A few hours will, I suppose, clear up this unpleasant mystery.

George suddenly vanished, two days before the Quarter Sessions, to go with Poulett to Paris, leaving the County, and Morpeth's motion of yesterday, and his wife at Lillies, to take care of themselves. I scolded, but he went. Mary and Arundel went yesterday to Calais, to have the pleasure of witnessing the arrival on French ground, of Louis XVIII, who left town this morning. We hear less from Paris, now the Allies are there, than we did a month ago; but the last news is, that Bonaparte is to retain the title of Emperor—for what reasons, I am not yet informed.

I have been a good deal amused by the serious inquiries which have been made, whether you are not going Ambassador to Paris, which I am assured is a thing very agreeable to the French Court, and probably not less acceptable to the Prince Regent. I once thought it not unlikely that Watkin and you would return home by way of Paris; but it is suggested that this may be less easy, because it is imagined that so many will ask for this indulgence, as to make it difficult for Lord Wellington to give it to any.

In the meantime, the general success of the moment carries on the business of the House of Commons, without

Lord Castlereagh, who, it is said, will come over for a few days, and return to finish the treaty at Paris or elsewhere.

The Government had no speakers on Morpeth's motion, and therefore made a bad figure; and Canning was quite deplorable in a very trimming speech, which ended in his voting with Ministers, and being well laughed at by Tierney. Morpeth and J. P. Grant made very good speeches, and so did Charles Wynn. The debate was so strong in our favour, that Leach and Lord F. Osborn, who had determined not to vote, were controlled by the argument, and voted with us.

Admiral Fremantle is come home, and entertains good hopes of succeeding in obtaining a red ribbon. He has already got from the Austrians a commanderie in the order of Maria Theresa, which was never before given to a British Admiral.

I suppose Sir G. Lee has written to you, as he said he would, to ask your permission to change Finmere *improved*, with Mr. Palmer, for Beachampton, which suits Sir G. better. I could only say, that I was persuaded you would do all you could to forward any wish of Sir G. Lee.

Lord Aylesbury is dead.

Lord Buckingham's position in Bordeaux was far from satisfactory to him, as it offered no opening for active service. He consulted Lord Wellington, who replied with his well-known promptitude.

FIELD MARSHAL THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Toulouse, April 27, 1814.

My Dear Lord,

I received only this day your kind letter of the 20th. I have long waited for the arrival of the brigade of troops to which you belong: and I wish you had been here in time to witness, and to take part in some of our recent operations. The last action, in particular, of the 10th inst., was very hard fought, owing to a little failure on the part of my friends, the Spaniards.

I assure you that I feel no desire to send you away, but the whole arrangement depends upon orders from England, for which I have written, and which I expect at every moment.

It will give me the greatest pleasure to see you, and I wish that you had thought of coming with the Duc d'Angoulême, as his reception would have been very gratifying to you. I am thinking of leaving Toulouse in a few days, and shall probably pass by Bordeaux; but I will let you know what my movements may be, and it will give me the greatest satisfaction to meet you. I will take care of your letters.

I hope that you left Lady Buckingham well, when you left England.

Ever, my dear Lord,
Yours most sincerely and affectionately,
Wellington.

Three days afterwards, Mr. Thomas Grenville wrote again.

RIGHT HONOURABLE THOMAS GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Cleveland Square, April 30, 1814.

MY DEAR LORD BUCKINGHAM.

I understand that news arrived yesterday of your being safely landed at Bordeaux; I therefore send (by General Calvert's help) the enclosed letter from Sir G. Lee.

The Duke of York gives Lord Proby hopes of the rank of Brigadier-General; and Lord Melville has been very kind to Admiral Fremantle, who has come home, and promises his best endeavours to obtain the Red Ribbon for him; the Austrians have given him a Commandeur's Cross of Maria Therèse, the first of that rank given to any of our naval officers.

It is now believed that Lord Castlereagh will stay to sign the Treaty at Paris, though Vansittart is so overpowered in the House of Commons, that I believe he heartily wishes for his leader back again. The public do not seem favourable here to the Crown Prince, and therefore the blockade of Norway is not popular: in equity we should have resisted that arrangement earlier, if it was to be objected to. We now cry out like a young prodigal, who having spent to his own fancy, the money that he had borrowed, resists the payment afterwards upon the plea of usury.

Bob Spencer is gone to America: the American Ministers who came to England as the shortest road from Petersburg to Gottenburg, seem ready to negociate here, and it begins to be rumoured that Maddison is *not personally* violent against England, but is only driven on by his party; this change of language I consider, as the first fruits of Bonaparte's retreat to Elba. I was told yesterday, that there is an order for discharging all seamen who were in our service prior to the last war with France. Though this is new, it seems the best mode of beginning naval reduction. The farmers begin to express their apprehension, least peace should sink the price of their grain; an event more terrible in their eyes, than war with all it's Cossacks and Lancers and Conscripts.

We are still very seasonably out of humour, at losing 5000 men, for the want of sending in fourteen days from Paris to Toulouse. Mary, as I thought, has proceeded to Paris. Of George, since his departure, I have not heard.

In addition to what has been stated in the preceding document respecting the United States' Government, it may as well here be stated that President Maddison, as soon as he learnt the complete overthrow of the Emperor Napoleon, completely changed his tone and his tactics. He at once sent a Message to Congress, recommending a repeal of the embargo recently laid on British shipping, and forwarded pacific instructions to the negotiators, who had been dispatched to Gottenburg.

The allied Sovereigns were, in the month of June, the honoured guests of England; and the Prince Regent was fully occupied in doing the honours of the kingdom to his illustrious allies. Among the distinguished persons who visited this country about the same period, was a Russian Princess, sister of the Emperor, a lady in the enjoyment of more than ordinary celebrity, not only in her own country, but in a considerable portion of Europe. This Grand-Duchess of Oldenburg, in her tour of sight-seeing appeared at Stowe; and the following account of her visit was written by the librarian, the well-known illustrator of Ireland's Historical Antiquities, and forwarded to the Marchioness, the Marquis being still with his battalion in France.

DR. O'CONNOR TO THE MARCHIONESS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Stowe, May 5, 1814.

DEAR MADAM.

I will make no apology for troubling you with a long letter, to inform you of the Duchess of Oldenburg's visit to Stowe, and I shall be as minute and circumstantial as my memory will permit; not merely on account of her illustrious rank, but chiefly on account of her amiable and easy manners, and the interest she felt in surveying the different objects that attracted her attention. She arrived here about five o'clock, having in her suite, two ladies and three gentlemen, all foreigners. One of the gentlemen wore a brilliant star, the order, I think, of St. Alexander Newsky; and only one of them could speak English; and if I do not mistake, it was he who attended Gustavus IV. of Sweden, when he visited Stowe, about four years ago, when I gave the late Lord Buckingham an account of that visit, as I now do to you of this.

Broadway conducted her Highness, &c., to the state rooms, from the Portico, where they remained until half past five, which allowed me time for preparing to receive them in the ball-room. I met the Duchess on her return from the state rooms in the library, where I made my bow, and was glad to find, what I did not expect, that she spoke in very good English, with great ease and fluency.

"This, sir," said she, "is a Princely house. The rooms are magnificent. It is one of the finest places I ever saw."

"I am glad," said I, "that your Highness finds it so. You have seen so many fine places."

"Where are Lord and Lady Buckingham now?"

"Lord Buckingham is at Bordeaux."

"At Bordeaux!"

"Yes, Madam, with a considerable force which he commands, to reinforce Lord Wellington."

"Indeed! and did he go before this late change for the Restoration of the French monarchy?"

"Yes, Madam; and it is now above four months since he volunteered in that service."

"Indeed! and where is Lady Buckingham, and where is her son? What is his age? What sized young man is he? Are you the librarian here?"

"Madam," said I, "I take care of the books, in the absence of the family."

"Are you long here?"

"About fifteen years."

"You must have seen a great deal in so many years. Have you been on the continent?"

"Yes, Madam, in France and Italy."

"Never in Germany or Russia?"

"No, Madam."

"How long have you been in Italy?"

"Twelve years."

"Then, you have read the Italian poets, and speak the language; but you never saw a finer country-house in Italy than this."

"No, Madam, except Casarta or Versailles, the palaces of sovereigns."

"I wish to see everything here. You are very kind to accompany me. I wish to see everything. I came from Oxford to see it, and have not rested since nine o'clock this morning."

"Your Highness must be fatigued, and will probably wish for some refreshment."

I trembled lest she should say *yes*, as there was nothing but my dinner that could be procured on so short a notice; and that was not a mouthful, as I thought, for each. However, she not only said *yes*, but added, also, in the most graceful manner, that she would be much obliged, as she meant not to stop until she arrived at Warwick. I then left her to Broadway, in the Chandos room, and ran to Mrs. Bell, and found Jervis and Humphries attending in liveries, and lamenting that nothing but a few sandwiches could be procured.

"Those folks," said I, "are so hungry now, that anything will go down. Get them my dinner, along with everything you can collect, to the music-room."

This was done with the greatest expedition and best order imaginable, so that I was myself surprised at it, considering the suddenness of the emergency.

On my return to her Highness, I found her still in the Chandos room, and I reminded her there, of the death of Clorinda in Tasso; and after she had considered the whole set out of the room, I showed her to the MS. room, where I wished to detain her as long as I could, to give the servants time to provide the lunch. Some of them, who ought to have helped Jervis and Thomas Humphreys, stood gazing with very pardonable curiosity, to get a glimpse at the Duchess; and all said, after she went off, "what a pity it was that such a beautiful face should be so concealed by such a bonnet."

In the MS. room, she sat down, looked at every manuscript I showed her, with very great attention; expressed herself highly delighted, said that Stowe is a Paradise, that England is the finest country in the world. She looked at the Duke of Somerset's miniature, Charles the Second's, Henry the Eighth's; said, what an unfortunate Queen poor Catherine of Arragon was, to be married to such a monster; looked at Lord Temple's pedigree; turned over many leaves of King Alfred's Psalter; then looked at the ancient musical notes in the Register of Hyde Abbey, or King Canute's book; then over the Saxon Charter of 692, which, she said, was a monument worthy of the princely place where it was preserved.

"But what a loss," she said, "if by any accident, such a monument were destroyed."

She then looked at the Charter of 715, &c., at the original portrait of Shakespeare, at some of the illuminated MSS.; and at last I said that probably her Highness might now be disposed to take some refreshment. I could plainly perceive that this was not an unwelcome word, and so I conducted her and suite to the music-room. My dinner is generally more than I want, and it happened luckily that yesterday, Mrs. Bell had roasted a bit of veal which would suffice until Friday, enough in good conscience for four days, and it was very nicely browned, with a plate of asparagus, two plates of sandwiches, some sweetmeats; and the whole party enjoyed it with all the relish that hunger and a wholesome dish of plain meat affords to a travelling appetite.

After her Highness had been helped by the Russian nobleman, who sat opposite to her, she insisted on my sitting near her. I said that Lord and Lady Buckingham, if they had known of her Highness's visit, would have ordered matters otherwise, or that if she had sent on one of her outriders, something better could have been procured; to which she replied, that she wished to travel expeditiously, and to give little trouble; that the hospitality of Englishmen is well known, she then added, "You must have seen a great deal of company here."

"Yes," said I, "sometimes from forty to fifty gentlemen and ladies, with their attendants, whole weeks together."

"Indeed!"

"Yes, Madam."

"Have you ever seen the Prince Regent here?"

"Yes, Madam, more than once, with his royal brothers and attendants, for a week each time."

"And have not the Royal family of France been here?"

"Yes," said I, "frequently."

"Is there not a book of Stowe?"

"Yes, Madam." I then showed it to her, and she asked me could I procure her a copy. I said I believed it was sold at Buckingham.

"I am sorry," said she, "I do not go that way. I intend to be at Warwick to-night."

It was now seven o'clock.

"I wish I could stay a little longer, to see more of the gardens. Could you order our carriages round to meet us anywhere, and we would walk a little."

I ordered the carriages to the Royal Pavilion, and showed her the way by the Temple of Bacchus.

"What a charming spot this is," said she, looking down the valley to the lake and the Temple of Venus. "This," said she, "is the true style of English gardening; Le Notre was all for straight lines. Who laid out these grounds?"

"Originally, a Mr. Brown, who went by the name of

'Capability,' but every succeeding Lord, since Pope's time, has improved."

"Does the present Lord like Stowe very much. Is he fond of improving it?"

"Yes, he has made several improvements."

"Does he collect paintings?"

"He has laid out large sums on paintings."

"I wish I could get the book of Stowe, but it is now too late."

She then said something kind to me for my attention, and that she was highly delighted, and so saying, she allowed me to help her into her carriage, and drove away. Two of her outriders were the Prince Regent's. The bells were very merry in offering their tribute, and I think that everything was as it ought to be. I forgot to say that her Highness went down to the cellar, that Jervis and Humphreys attended with lights, that the foreign servants found the beer delicious, and that all seemed to be very happy, and to have enjoyed the scene more than if there [had been] any formality in their way. The Duchess is very handsome, nearly of your size, her countenance very pleasing, and her desire of information seems not to be for idle parade, but to bring home to her own country, ideas that may be useful to it. I think you would like her very much, and if, in consequence of hearing that she wished for the book of Stowe, you sent her a copy (excuse this freedom) I think it would be an acceptable present as could be thought of.

I have the honour to be,
Your Ladyship's grateful
And obedient humble servant,
CH. O'CONNOR.

A few days later, the following communication was forwarded to the Marquis of Buckingham. Lord Grenville's anticipations were verified, and his remarks on the state of France were equally true. The postscript refers to a distinction which had been long promised the Marquis, and which a sense of his merit may now have influenced the government to fulfil. The letter also refers to a debate in the House of Lords, which followed Lord Grey's motion in behalf of Norway, in the course of which Lord Grenville delivered one of his most animated and eloquent orations.

LORD GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Camelford House, May 9, 1814.

Many thanks to you for your interesting letter: every account from France seems to agree in indicating more uneasiness and latent discontent than one might have expected in a country so recently delivered from so terrible a scourge. But a curious parallel may be found to what is now passing there in the case of our Restoration, when I think it is Clarendon that says it, the Government had never an hour's security till the army was disbanded. This is an operation which in the manners and customs of those days, and in our country, was practicable, but how is it to be effected at this time of day, and in the present state of France?

The military character which had been given to the whole of that Government and people, was one of the things which Europe had to fear most, before the last change of affairs at Paris, and this danger, I am afraid will long continue to exist, though the ministers of Louis XVIII, be they who they may, must feel that the danger of this circumstance is still more formidable to their mastsr and to themselves than it is to other countries.

I am very glad that Louis XVIII. has taken time to consider of the new constitution. Whether he will be able to make any material amendment in it or not, it is still very useful that it should appear to France and to Europe, to be accepted on deliberation, and as the act of his own free will being there, and in possession of his Crown, and not submitted to as a condition of his return. And, certainly, if the matter really be open to deliberation, I never yet have seen (of all the numerous French constitutions I have lived to witness) any one which admitted of more improvement than this, which I do not hesitate to pronounce to be, in practice, absolutely *inexecutable.*

It is a bad return, to give you my barren speculations upon your pregnant facts. But we are happy enough to have no news here, and God grant us the long enjoyment of that best of all conditions.

We are full of nothing but very ridiculous preparations for very foolish exhibitions of ourselves to foreign sovereigns (if they do come here) in that character, which least of all becomes us—that of courtly magnificence. Our kings never have, and I hope they will never be able to come near to their neighbours in that respect.

We are now fitting up the Duke of Cumberland's house, to receive Alexander in, because we have none of our own. And in the meantime, our future son-in-law lodges at his tailor's! because he has neither house nor hotel to put his head in; and though we drink his health occasionally with three cheers, and twice as many speeches, we do not love him well enough to give him a bed anywhere else.

I begin to be not a little impatient for your return, and most earnestly hope that you will take Paris in your way here. There cannot be the least use in your sailing back with your provisionals, and it would be a thousand pities to lose such an opportunity of seeing so curious a scene. I have no fear that the play will be over before you arrive. I wish I may prove a false prophet, but I fear there are still many acts to come.

There is nothing doing in Parliament, except that to-morrow we are to make a vain effort to save ourselves from the disgrace of being made the cats'-paw to draw Norway out of the fire, for that most virtuous prince, faithful ally, and legitimate sovereign, Prince Bernadotte.

All the world has been talking here of an intention to perform towards you a promise long since given as you know to him who had so dearly earned it.

You have certainly acquired fresh right to it, and may justly claim it on your own account, as well as on his, but I fear the thing is too right to be probable.

It is said, also, that Louis XVIII. expressed a desire that it should be so; but I have this only from report. To believe him insensible of what he owed in that quarter, would be to suppose that contrary to all example, he had acquired in exile all the most royal virtues of reigning sovereigns.

Once more adieu.

CHAPTER IV.

[1814.]

THE PRINCESS OF WALES REFUSED ADMISSION TO THE QUEEN'S "DRAWING ROOMS"—CORRESPONDENCE AND PROCEEDINGS OF HER ROYAL HIGHNESS IN CONSEQUENCE — DEBATES IN PARLIAMENT RESPECTING HER—LORD CASTLEREAGH'S CLAIMS TO THE CONSIDERATION OF HIS COUNTRYMEN—A RUSSIAN INTRIGUE—THE PRINCESS CHARLOTTE REJECTS THE PRINCE OF ORANGE — ELOPEMENT OF HER ROYAL HIGHNESS FROM WARWICK HOUSE — HER RETURN — SPEECH OF THE DUKE OF SUSSEX IN THE HOUSE OF LORDS ON THE SUBJECT — MR. WHITBREAD'S PROCEEDINGS RESPECTING THE INCREASE IN THE INCOME OF THE PRINCESS OF WALES — THE PRINCESS LEAVES ENGLAND — MR. CANNING ACCEPTS OFFICE — PROCEEDINGS OF THE PRINCESS ABROAD — APPEARANCE AND CONDUCT OF THE PRINCE REGENT—CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON AND LORD GRENVILLE ON SLAVERY IN THE FRENCH COLONIES — LORD CASTLEREAGH AT THE CONGRESS OF VIENNA.

CHAPTER IV.

While every one in the three kingdoms was under the influence of excitement, it was not to be expected that her Royal Highness the Princess of Wales, would remain unmoved. The Queen was about holding two drawing-rooms, and as the Prince Regent intended to be present, his Royal Highness had requested her Majesty to intimate to the Princess of Wales, his determination not to meet her, either in public or in private. The Queen was thus placed under the painful necessity of intimating to her Royal Highness that she could not be received at her drawing-rooms. This was quite sufficient provocation for the inflammable nature of the Princess, and the following day, her Royal Highness addressed the Queen at considerable length, apparently acceding to the prohibition, but threatening to appeal to the public. Her Majesty answered with characteristic dignity, which elicited a rejoinder from her angry daughter-in-law, which produced only a simple acknowledgment from the Queen. She then addressed herself to the Prince Regent, referring as usual, to the declaration of her entire innocence by the Government of 1807, and giving him to understand, that they *must* meet at the approaching marriage of their daughter, and at their *coronation;* adding that the prohibition was rendered intolerable, in consequence of the distinguished visitors then flocking into the country; one of whom, the illustrious heir of the House of Orange (the Prince described in Lord Grenville's letter, as being obliged to lodge at his tailor's) had "announced himself to me as my future son-in-law."

Nothing arising out of this correspondence, the Princess once more addressed a letter to the Speaker, going over the old ground of wrongs and rights, and forwarding copies of the letters.[1]

In a previous sitting, Messrs. Ponsonby and Whitbread had found it necessary to deny being advisers of the Princess, and a new advocate had appeared in Mr. Methuen, who had given notice of a motion on the subject. When making the promised motion on the 4th of June, Mr. Methuen said all that he could say for his client, insisting on her innocence having been proved to the satisfaction of the Government and the country, and dwelling on the hardship of excluding her from the society of the illustrious visitors, and her intended son-in-law. He ended by proposing "that an humble address be presented to the Prince Regent, praying, that he would be graciously pleased to acquaint the House, *by whose advice he had been induced* to form the unalterable resolution of never meeting her Royal Highness the Princess of Wales, on any occasion, either in public or private.

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[1] A curious account of the concoction of these letters, by Messrs. Brougham and Whitbread, will be found in the "Diary of the Times of George IV.," Vol. I., p. 329, 330.

The ill-judged Minute of 1807, appears to have tied not only the hands of ministers, but their tongues, for no one but Mr. Bragge Bathurst, attempted to speak for the Government; and he took the weak and equivocal course of denying the prohibition to the Queen's drawing-rooms, saying that the Prince had only signified his intention of not meeting her there. He also referred to the Minute of Council, as making a distinction between criminality and other minor charges; proving that the acquittal was not so complete as had been alleged. This brought up Mr. Whitbread to dwell on the indulgences that had been granted the Princess, by the advice of the Government of 1807, which he said she still ought to enjoy, and confidently stated that whenever they were called to the throne, the Prince and Princess *must* meet to be crowned together. A few more speeches were made by other members, but the result might have been anticipated—Mr. Methuen withdrew his motion.

Mr. Canning was not among the public advocates of the Princess, on this occasion. On the 14th of June, his brother, Mr. Stratford Canning (Lord Stratford de Redcliffe), was gazetted, as Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary to the Confederated Swiss Cantons. A short time previously, Mr. Thomas Sydenham, who has been often mentioned in the Secret Despatches, as an intimate friend of the Marquis Wellesley, was gazetted as Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary at Lisbon; and a little later, Mr. Wellesley Pole was appointed Master of the Mint. The Wellesley and Canning opposition, therefore, must necessarily have become less intense.

Mr. Methuen again came forward on the 23rd of June, in the cause of the Princess. But this time, his demand was limited to an increased allowance for her Royal Highness. Lord Castlereagh, in reply, detailed the arrangements which had been voluntarily entered into by the Princess, when a formal separation was agreed to between herself and the Prince Regent, in 1809; and, after making some remarks on the injudicious conduct of her advisers, stated that the Government were not unwilling to increase her allowance. Mr. Whitbread then made an energetic appeal to the House in behalf of her Royal Highness. Mr. Grattan also spoke in favour of a larger income, and the motion was withdrawn.

Among the places visited by the Prince Regent and his illustrious guests, was the University of Oxford; the occasion, under the direction of the Chancellor, produced a very grand and imposing ceremony, which furnished materials for a quarto volume.[1]

The Emperor of Russia, and the King of Prussia, were everywhere seen with the Prince, but nowhere with the Princess. This was extremely annoying to her Royal Highness; and not the less so, because the

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[1] "An Account of the Visit of His Royal Highness the Prince Regent, and their Imperial and Royal Majesties the Emperor of Russia and the King of Prussia to the University of Oxford, in June, 1814." Oxford, at the Clarendon Press, 1815, large 4to., pp. 89.

Regent shared in the popularity enjoyed by his guests. She tried hard, either to mar their acclamations, or divert them towards herself; and on one occasion, contrived to attract public attention at the Italian Opera, just as the plaudits that had welcomed the appearance of the Regent and his friends were subsiding, and enjoyed the most complete success in the storm of applause which her recognition excited. The Prince, it is said, turned pale upon seeing her enter the opposite box.[1]

The circle of distinguished visitors who thronged the fashionable thoroughfares of the metropolis, and exhibited themselves as champions in the cause of constitutional freedom and good government, was generally attended by one, in whose person the real championship had been maintained with the devotion and disinterestedness which the former had satisfied themselves with professing. This was the indefatigable member of the government of the Prince Regent, who had given a new impulse to the struggle from the period of his accepting office, by the energy with which he had directed negociations, the skill with which he had arranged coalitions, the rapidity with which he had forwarded supplies, the tact with which he had suppressed jealousies, and the judgment with which he had suggested plans. There can be little doubt, that the lion's share of the honours of the triumph somewhat ostentatiously claimed by the Emperor Alexander, would never have been within his reach, had not Lord Castlereagh effected the combination of powers hostile to Bonaparte, suggested a plan of action, and placed the confederacy in a position to attack their powerful enemy at an advantage. To Lord Castlereagh, therefore, was due a prominent place among the illustrious throng on whom the people of England lavished their heart-felt applause, as the saviours of Europe—certain transactions which shortly afterwards occurred at the Congress of Vienna, showed with what want of discrimination. Indeed, with all the assumed magnanimity of the Czar, he was playing a game of his own, in which selfishness formed a very large ingredient.

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[1] "Memoirs of Moore," Vol. II., p. 19.

Lord Dudley, writing to the Bishop of Llandaff, does justice to the decision and promptitude of the Plenipotentiary: "There is a Congress of Ambassadors here to negociate a peace. I have no doubt but that the interests of England will be well taken care of by Lord Castlereagh. I have heard but one opinion as to the firmness and ability with which he conducted himself in all the late transactions. His arrival at head-quarters was most critical; but for that, the spirit that dictated the foolish declaration of Frankfort (that which Whitbread so much praised) would probably have prevailed, and Bonaparte would still have inhabited the Tuileries."[1]

The Princess of Wales had threatened, under her own hand, to "make a great rumpus in the Houses, both of Lords and Commons, which," she said, "I trust will accelerate his (Prince Regent) *departure to the skies.*"[1] Her menaces and confidence produced no advantage to her, nor evil to her husband; and, annoyed by the neglect of the Allied Sovereigns, and restrained by the counsels of her advisers, she expressed a determination of quitting the country.

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[1] "Letters of the Earl of Dudley." May 7, 1814.

The Grand-Duchess of Oldenburg contrived to obtain considerable influence over the Princess Charlotte, and persuaded her to reject the Prince of Orange. The object of this was not suspected at the time; but it was a Russian intrigue that, shortly afterwards, fully explained itself. Some amusing speculations respecting this Russian Princess, are indulged in by the authoress of the "Diary of George IV.," Vol. III., p. 48. The Prince Regent is stated to have kept her under strict *espionage*, to make her marry one of his brothers—the Grand Duchess had already one husband—and to prevent her having any communication with the Princess of Wales, which was possible any day during her stay in England, through a third party. The real object of the visit of the Duchess of Oldenburg could not have been suspected, or the Prince Regent would not have placed her exactly in the position in which she could succeed with the greatest ease. The writer especially adds, in a subsequent page: "The Regent evidently wished his daughter to take the Prince of Orange; otherwise, why should he, who was so careful in excluding from Princess Charlotte's society any one inclined to encourage her in independent principles, have permitted her to be intimate with this cunning Russian lady, *whose very eyes betrayed the wily nature of her character.*"

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[1] See her note to Lady Charlotte Campbell, "Diary of the Times of George IV.," Vol. I., p. 325.

It was said that the Princess Charlotte's insurmountable objection to the union arose from repugnance to quitting her own country; but Lord Clancarty was commissioned to propose her constant residence in England, should the marriage take place.[1]

Some amusement may be found in tracing the course of this Russian intrigue. In January, 1814, the Emperor expressed to Lord Castlereagh the strong interest he felt in the proposed marriage of the Princess Charlotte and the Prince of Orange, and was extremely desirous that himself and his sister, the Grand Duchess Catherine, should be permitted to visit England.[2] A month or two subsequently, Russia exhibits much solicitude to obtain a direct interest in the affairs of Holland.[3] A little later, this Grand Duchess precedes the Emperor as a visitor to England, and immediately endeavours to obtain the confidence of the Princess Charlotte, who thenceforth becomes intractable on the subject of the proposed alliance. Lord Castlereagh wrote to Lord Clancarty on the 26th of June, "The circumstances attending the rupture of the marriage are still mysterious;"[4] but the mystery, shortly afterwards, began to

[1] See his letter to Viscount Castlereagh in that valuable collection of State Papers, the "Castlereagh Correspondence," Vol. x., p. 62.

[2] Ibid. Vol. ix., p. 112.

[3] Ibid. p. 329.

[4] Ibid. Vol. x., p. 61.

unfold itself. The Emperor returned to his own dominions, by way of Holland, and immediately a marriage was rumoured between its Hereditary Prince and the Grand Duchess Helen. "Connected with this," writes Mr. George Jackson at Berlin, "is the expectation affected to be entertained of Russia procuring East Friedland for the Duke of Oldenburg."[1] The Emperor, by the way, about this period, had more than one alliance in view for his sisters, to strengthen his relations with the European Powers; for his Ambassador is stated to have been very busy at Madrid to obtain the King of Spain as a brother-in-law for his master.[2] In September, the Czar allowed it to be known at St. Petersburgh, *as a secret*, that a marriage was contemplated between the Prince of Orange, who had been invited to Russia, and the Grand Duchess Anne.[3] The following summer they were married.

The Duchess of Oldenburg was also suspected of being a means of communication between the Princess Charlotte and her mother, and was evidently regarded by the latter with more than ordinary admiration. In one of her confidential letters, written at the period, her Royal Highness writes: "She is a clever woman, and knows the world and mankind well [if report did not belie her, at least, part of this was true]. My daughter cannot be in better hands. They are a great deal together, which makes the Regent outrageous, and his good looks and spirits will not be of long duration, if he will be beaten by his daughter."[1] Encouraged by such a friend and such a mother, the young Princess proceeded on a course that her warmest friends regarded with deep concern.

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[1] "Castlereagh Correspondence," Vol. x., p. 97.

[2] Ibid, pp. 164, 179.

[3] Ibid, Vol. xi., p. 14.

The intrigue that was going on, at last, became known to the Prince Regent, and his Royal Highness, accompanied by the Bishop of Salisbury, suddenly presented themselves at the residence of the Princess Charlotte, Warwick House, and announced their intention of taking her with them to Carlton House. The Princess having obtained leave to retire—probably to prepare for her journey—at once hurried down a back-stairs into the street, called a hackney-coach, and drove to her mother's town residence, Connaught House. Her escape having transpired, her retreat was soon ascertained, and the Duke of York and the Lord Chancellor were sent by her father to bring her back. It so happened that the Princess of Wales was then secretly negociating with the Government, for the means of travelling abroad, and feared that this step of the Princess Charlotte might compromise her, and prevent the fulfilment of her desire to leave the country, she, therefore, not only did not give her daughter a cordial reception, but absolutely persuaded her to go back, before the arrival of the deputation sent for her by the Prince Regent. This advice was very far from agreeable. But we must allow Lord Eldon to relate the curious sequel.

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[1] "Diary of the Times of George IV.," Vol. I., p. 364.

"When we arrived, I informed her a carriage was at the door, and we would attend her home. But home she would not go. She kicked and bounced, but would not go. Well, to do my office as gently as I could, I told her I was sorry for it; for, until she did go, she would be obliged to entertain us, as we would not leave her; at last, she accompanied us."[1]

Such an event could not pass without exciting much observation, and exaggerated accounts were circulated. The House of Lords on the 18th of July, was startled with a violent speech from the Duke of Sussex, which included a variety of questions, referring to this transaction, addressed to Lord Liverpool; who did not think proper to answer one of them, but insisted on the Prince Regent's right to control his own child, and the impropriety of any interference on the part of the House of Lords. The Duke not being satisfied, gave notice of a motion. The Lord Chancellor followed with some stringent observations to the same purpose as that of his colleague, and there the discussion terminated. On the 25th, his Royal Highness made another speech, in which he withdrew his motion—as Lord Grey acknowledged, by his advice.[2]

On the 4th of July, Mr. Vansittart moved for a Committee, to consider the documents respecting the Princess of Wales, when Lord Castlereagh proposed to increase the income of her Royal Highness to £50,000 per annum. As if to lessen the effect of this liberal proposal, Mr. Whitbread stated to the House, that the Princess had never authorized any proposition for an increase of income. And on the following day, she sent a letter to the Speaker, stating that she would be satisfied with £35,000. It is amusing now, that the public have been placed behind the scenes, and observed how those Marionettes were moved, to read the profession of sympathy for the public burthens put forward in this epistle, which was concocted by Mr. Whitbread, and very reluctantly sanctioned by the Princess, who could with difficulty be brought to adopt his opinion, that the offer was insidious and unhandsome.[1]

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[1] "Life of Lord Eldon," Vol. I., p. 523.

[2] See an account in "Romilly's Diary," Vol. III., p. 145.

Her Royal Highness first wrote a proper letter to Lord Castlereagh, thankfully accepting the proposal. When Mr. Whitbread explained to the Princess, that £50,000 would oblige her to remain in this country, and spend it where she received it, but that a less one would afford her liberty, she fell into the trap, and entered into his view of the subject with alacrity. Mr. Whitbread then wrote a letter to the Speaker, and she copied it.[2]

Mr. Whitbread, it should be remembered, had publicly declared in the House of Commons, that he was not the adviser of the Princess. On the 8th day of July, when Lord Castlereagh, in the

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[1] "Diary of the Times of George IV." Vol. II., p. 15.

[2] Ibid, p. 21.

House of Commons, remarked on the discrepancy that existed in her letters to himself and to the Speaker, Mr. Whitbread acknowledged that he had advised her acceptance of the smaller sum, and strove to make that acceptance as ungracious as possible. The sum of £35,000 for her Royal Highness's annual income, was then voted.

Those members of the Opposition who had made so much political capital out of the Princess, soon became alarmed at the idea of her Royal Highness leaving them, and on the 30th of July, Mr. Tierney made an appeal to the House of Commons, to prevent her going abroad, asserting that the House had voted an increase in her allowance, solely to maintain her in adequate dignity and splendour in England. Lord Castlereagh followed by Mr. Rose, administered a sharp castigation to the honourable gentleman, for his unwarranted interposition—which the last speaker described as "extremely improper, if not absurd." Mr. Tierney subsequently stated on the authority of Mr. Whitbread, that the intention of the Princess of Wales to quit the country, was contrary to his advice. Parliament was prorogued the same day, and on the 8th of August, her Royal Highness sailed from England on board "the Jason" frigate.

As it appears that this step was not sanctioned by the most trusted advisers of the Princess, who it was who suggested it, becomes a fair subject of speculation. It is confidently stated in a work of considerable celebrity, that the idea emanated from Mr. Canning, who was the channel of communication between her Royal Highness and the Government, by whom his services on this occasion were promptly acknowledged and rewarded.[1] This statement, however, amounts to no more than conjecture: but there is an announcement in the Gazette, under the date October 25, that if it does not throw light upon the mystery, completely justifies the suspicions recorded in a former page;[2] this was "the Right Honourable George Canning, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to the Prince Regent of Portugal."

The Princess quitted England with a somewhat motley retinue, yet irreproachable in comparison with the discreditable crew she subsequently gathered around her. She went first to Brunswick; shortly afterwards, she proceeded to Geneva, where she joined the Empress Marie Louise, with whom she rapidly cultivated a warm friendship. They sang together—a most curious example of royal harmony, they being the separated wives of the two most formidable opponents among the sovereigns of Europe. The Grand Duchess of Parma, in her subsequent history, exhibited more than one point of resemblance to her companion.

The Princess of Wales soon began to display those traits of character which had often alarmed her friends in England. According to one observer, "the Princess seems satisfied with nothing, and has a spirit of restlessness in her, which belongs to the unhappy and unprincipled." Thence, her Royal Highness proceeded to Naples, but not before she had scandalized the moral Swiss by her vulgarity and indelicacy, at a public ball. "What was my horror," writes one of her friends, "when I beheld the poor Princess enter, dressed *en Venus*, or rather, not dressed further than the waist. I was, as she used to say herself, 'all over shock.' A more injudicious choice of costume could not be adopted. She waltzed the whole night with pertinacious obstinacy; and amongst others whom she honoured with her hand, upon this occasion, was Sismondi. These two large figures turning together were quite miraculous."

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[1] "Diary of the Times of George IV.," Vol. II., p. 69.

[2] See Letter from Mr. Francis Horner, *ante* p. 37.

The writer adds details of a less disagreeable and of a much more ludicrous character. "After dinner, she took me aside, and entered upon a wild plan of what she intended to do, and where she intended to go; then talked of giving honours and orders to certain of her suite; and made such a confusion respecting the geographical arrangements of her route, that it was enough, as she used herself to say, on other occasions, 'to die for laugh.' Fortunately for me, a very few days terminated her career at Geneva, and she prosecuted her journey without having an idea where she was going to, or how she would be received at any of the Courts where she purposed to reside. It was really as if, on leaving England, she had cast off all common sense and conduct, and had gone suddenly mad."[1]

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[1] "Diary of the Times of George IV.," Vol. II., p. 85.

It would have been a great relief to all her respectable friends, to have been able to entertain a conviction of the insanity of her Royal Highness; but the real fact was—and it soon became sufficiently prominent—that she had chosen to go abroad to enjoy complete freedom from restraints of all kinds, and therefore appeared to have cast off common sense and common decency. Her English attendants were indignant at the indelicacy of her dress and conduct, and were soon afterwards forced by a sense of self-respect to quit her service.

The Prince Regent is described, at this period, in most attractive colours. "Nothing can be more agreeable and good-natured than he is," observes a well-pleased courtier. "In excellent spirits, and looking, in health and beauty, better than I have seen him for years. He wears a certain new sort of darkish-coloured wig, without powder, that particularly becomes him."[1] His social attractions were indeed very great, and have been fully acknowledged by an eminent Court authority, who ought, from particular circumstances, to have been somewhat prejudiced against him. "There is no doubt," this lady has remarked, "that few persons ever have possessed, or ever can possess, greater fascination than did the then Prince of Wales. He had the faculty of persuading all on whom he chose to exercise the spell or charm, that he took a cordial interest in *their* interests; and, without allowing the person whom he so addressed to forget he was a Prince, he exalted him to a level with himself as a friend."[1]

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[1] "Diary of the Times of George IV.," Vol. II., p. 91.

This faculty was, no doubt, a valuable one, in a position that demanded the highest powers of conciliation, but unless the interest so flatteringly exhibited was genuine—and this is said to have been very rarely the case—it is difficult to appreciate such a distinction. The Prince, however, possessed qualities of a higher order, that made him extremely admired among that select circle which enjoyed the honour of his intimacy. He was a brilliant conversationalist, an admirable mimic, and a clever narrator: his company, therefore, could not fail of being a source of real gratification to his guests, among whom it was not unusual to find some of the ablest men in England.

The question of the Abolition of Slavery in the French Colonies, excited great interest in this country, and was brought under the consideration of the Minister of Louis XVIII. in the autumn of 1814. Prominent among the public men who strove to induce the English Government to exercise its influence with the restored monarch in behalf of this humane policy, was the Minister who carried the great measure of 1806. Lord Grenville not only made a powerful speech on the subject in his place in Parliament, in June, but published and circulated it wherever he thought its perusal would advance the enlightened views he had there advocated. Among other persons in authority, he communicated with the distinguished man who then represented his sovereign at the French Court, from whom he received the following reply.

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[1] "Diary of the Times of George IV.," Vol. II., p. 91, note.

THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON TO LORD GRENVILLE.

Paris, October 30, 1814.

MY DEAR LORD,

I received your letter, and the copies you were so kind as to send me of the publication of your speech on the restoration of the French colonies; and I immediately sent one copy to M. de Blacas, to be presented to the King. I enclose M. de Blacas' answer to the note which I wrote to him upon this occasion, from which you will see that the King is not likely to be displeased with the freedom with which you have discussed the subject.

Believe me, &c.
WELLINGTON.

The French ministers, however, were far from zealous opposers of colonial slavery, but the manner in which the subject was taken up by the English government obliged them to do something, and promise more. The Duke of Wellington, writing on the 4th of November, to Mr. Wilberforce, who appears to have become more urgent on the subject, than suited the dignified pace of diplomacy—says: "Lord Liverpool will have informed you, that orders have at last been issued to prevent the trade in slaves by French subjects, on the coast of Africa, north of Cape Formosa. Much remains still to be done, to secure the execution of those orders, to provide for the condemnation of those persons and their vessels, found disobeying them; and for the care of the slaves captured in the vessels which may be taken in breach of the order; to all which points I am attending. But we must keep the subject out of discussion, and publication in England, if we propose to do any real good. His Majesty's servants cannot be more zealous than they are, they deserve confidence, and ought to be trusted; and I am quite convinced that the publications and discussions on the subject do more harm than good. We have now brought the abolition practically to the state in which it was before peace was made with France, with the additional advantage, that France has engaged to abolish entirely in five years. We must not relax in our endeavours to do more; but it is really necessary to leave this interest, like others, in the hands of those whose duty it is to take care of it."[1]

Notwithstanding this very decided opinion, there were persons of influence, and intelligence in England, whose opinions were equally decided for diffusing as widely as possible in both countries, whatever information could be collected on the subject, and their interposition appears to have induced the Duke to communicate again with Lord Grenville, early in the following year.

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[1] "Wellington Despatches," Vol. xii., p. 170.

THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON TO LORD GRENVILLE.

Paris, January 11, 1815.

My dear Lord,

I have had a correspondence with the Secretary of the African Society, respecting a translation which he wished should be made here, and the publication of your Lordship's speech in the House of Lords, of the 27th of June, 1814; upon which subjects I informed him I should address you after I should again have perused it. The result of the consideration I have given to it, after consulting with some literary friends here, who are likewise friends to the cause, is, that it is most advisable not to publish the speech in French.

I really believe the King and his Ministers are sincere in their desire to abolish the Slave Trade altogether; and till they can effect that object, they will mitigate the evil by all the means in their power. The King told me that he could not act contrary to the wishes of his people, and that he found the opinions of the best-informed persons in France upon the question, and of the nation, in general, by no means what they were in England. It then occurred to me that the best tracts upon the Slave Trade, such as the abstract of the evidence, the policy by Mr. Clarkson, and Mr. Wilberforce's letters to his constituents, should be published here, to inform those who would read, and to acquire for the King and his Government some support for the measures which they had engaged, and were disposed to adopt. I, at the same time, thought it advisable to endeavour to put a stop to acrimonious discussion, which was carried on upon the subject by the newspapers of the two countries, which answered no purpose except to inflame the public mind here, and to convince men in general that we had some object in abolishing the Slave

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Trade ourselves, and in urging the same measure upon France, besides those we professed, and thus to throw fresh difficulties in the King's way.

From what I have above recited, your Lordship will perceive the principle on which I have acted in encouraging publications on the Slave Trade here; and I now proceed to tell you why I think it advisable not to publish your speech.

It was addressed to an Assembly supposed to have, and which had, all the knowledge existing respecting the Slave Trade; and, therefore, it contains nothing more than general allusions to the facts of which the people here have no knowledge whatever. The object of the speech was to prevail upon the House of Lords to enquire into the conduct of the Ministers in the negociation of the Peace, in order that the first additional articles might not be ratified. Some of the topics brought forward are of a nature to hurt the vanity of this nation, and to increase their prejudices against us and our measure; and it contains no facts or reasonings which apply to the main question, whether it is expedient or otherwise for France to abolish the trade. Then some of the finest parts of the speech impute blame to both Governments, and principally to our own, which I do not think it advisable to publish, particularly respecting the King. Indeed, I must add that, in the situation which I fill, I could not be instrumental in publishing and circulating what is therein written of either Government.

I entirely concur in your Lordship's opinion respecting the translation of Mr. Wilberforce's letter to M. de Talleyrand, of which Mr. Harrison has informed me I am about to have another edition published.

Believe me, &c.

WELLINGTON.

What has been stated on this subject by a shrewd observer, expresses the exact state of the case. "You see that, in spite of all that has been said here about the Slave Trade, the arrangement upon that subject is such as no friend to humanity can look at without pain. But I really believe Lord Castlereagh did his best. You can hardly imagine how far removed all foreigners are from those notions of religion, and justice, and mercy, which it is the chief blessing of Providence upon this country to have diffused so widely amongst us. They not only have them not themselves, but they utterly disbelieve in their existence in others. The abolition of the Slave Trade is considered by them as a mere commercial speculation on our part. Our colonies are stocked; theirs are not; and we wish to preserve the monopoly. That, they think, is the secret of all the petitions of the people, and addresses of the Parliament of England; and they laugh in your face if you talk of any other motive."[1]

A great amount of misrepresentation has been published respecting the proceedings of Lord Castlereagh at the Congress of Vienna, which was held soon after the visit of the Allied Sovereigns to England. The chief accusation affecting his share in the deliberations of this grand council of European diplomatists, is of subserviency to the Emperor Alexander, who, having been permitted to take the lion's share of applause during the recent rejoicings in the capitals of France and England, now demanded the lion's share of the spoil, in the final arrangements that had previously been settled to come off in the capital of Austria. The fact, however, happens to be, that the principal representative of the Court of St. James's, so far from advancing Russian aggrandizement at the expense of the Grand Duchy of Warsaw, opposed it most strenuously, even though it was supported by the entire influence of Prussia, whose King entertained equally rapacious views on Saxony. The Czar insisted on the crown of Poland being joined to that of Russia, and supported his demand by a formidable military demonstration.

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[1] "Letters of the Earl of Dudley," p. 46.

A detail of the proceedings of this celebrated Congress is beyond the scope of this work, or much profit might be obtained by the reader, in tracing the numberless artifices of Alexander to deceive the Plenipotentiaries of his Allies, whom he could neither bribe nor intimidate. Nothing could be more amusing than his affectation of liberality, while secretly bent on consolidating a comprehensive despotism. Frederick William was content to play into his hands, much in the miserable way his successor, more recently, has kept up the same game; but an intrigue, which the liberal Czar had set on foot, to delude the Hungarians into throwing off their allegiance at Vienna, to transfer it to St. Petersburg, so alarmed Austria, that Lord Castlereagh found little difficulty in persuading that Government to enter into an alliance with England *and France* (whose consent to such a coalition this sagacious Minister had previously gained for such an eventuality), to oppose the unjust pretensions of Russia and Prussia. A secret treaty between these three Powers was signed, at the commencement of the following year, an important feature of which was, that each bound itself to bring into the field an army of 150,000 men, to support the decisions of the Congress. Bavaria, Hanover, the Netherlands, and, subsequently, Sardinia, were to be invited to join this coalition. If a knowledge of this portion of these extraordinary proceedings profit the reader, no less edifying will be the subsequent transactions, when Russia, finding her aims not quite so easy of accomplishment as they had appeared, expressed a disinclination to support those of Prussia. The sequel may easily be anticipated.[1]

"The conduct of the British Minister on this occasion," says a modern historian, "was worthy of the cause for which he had contended, and the nation which he represented, and he met with cordial support from both M. Talleyrand and Prince Metternich, who beheld, with undisguised apprehension, these proposed additions to the power of their nearest neighbours."[2]

Both sovereigns lowered their tone considerably; and, soon afterwards, intelligence of so startling a nature reached them, that they were content, at once, to lay aside all ideas of appropriation, and draw more cordially than ever towards the Allies whom they had so lately defied. The Prussian diplomatist, Baron von Stein, was the chief adviser of the Emperor of Russia, from the commencement of the war, and from his Memoirs, lately completed by his friend, Herr Pertz,[1] the reader may refer for an account of the various transactions that arose out of it. He must, however, take the Baron's statements with some reserve; particularly his opinions of cotemporary diplomatists, which are usually marked by strong prejudice.

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[1] Much interesting information respecting these grand diplomatic manœuvres may be obtained from the "Despatches of Viscount Castlereagh," who played there a very important part.

[2] "Alison's History of Europe," Chap. XCII., p. 56.

Rumours, in the course of this year, were again afloat, of a coalition, by which the Grenvilles were to strengthen the existing Administration. These are referred to by a clever but interested cotemporary, after the following fashion: "I am very glad to hear that Lord Grenville's conduct has been so satisfactory to all parties. In spite of some faults and some mistakes, he is *altogether the ablest and most accomplished of our statesmen; and, moreover, a man of unimpeached honour and worth.*"[2] The writer then adds his opinion, at considerable length, that nothing was so improbable as Lord Grenville's support of Ministers—a contingency that every day, as will eventually be shown, rendered more and more probable, till, at last, it became inevitable.

As insurmountable obstacles, Lord Dudley refers to "a rooted aversion" to Lord Grenville on the part of the Prince Regent—a favourite myth of a certain class of politicians, which we have already disposed of—and his obligations to the party to which he was attached, which would disgrace him, if he consented "to a partial arrangement;" the alleged cause being as imaginary as the anticipated effect. It is impossible to read Lord Grenville's correspondence, for some years past, without observing the very frail ties which must have connected such a statesman with so heterogeneous an Opposition. He appears to have maintained his position, rather from disinclination for ministerial employment, than from inclination for Opposition politics.

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[1] "Das Leben des Ministers, Freiherrn von Stein." Berlin, 1849-55.

[2] "Letters of the Earl of Dudley," p. 48.

CHAPTER V.

[1815.]

SATISFACTORY RESULTS OF THE DEPARTURE OF THE PRINCESS OF WALES—MEETING OF OPPOSITION LEADERS AT DROPMORE—THE CORN-LAWS—RIOTS IN LONDON DURING THEIR DISCUSSION IN PARLIAMENT—LORD GRENVILLE'S PROTEST AGAINST THE CORN BILL—LORD GREY AND LORD GRENVILLE TAKE OPPOSITE VIEWS RESPECTING THE RENEWAL OF THE WAR CONSEQUENT ON THE ESCAPE OF BONAPARTE FROM ELBA—MR. FRANCIS HORNER COINCIDES WITH LORD GREY—WRITES TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM TO RESIGN HIS SEAT—REPLY OF THE MARQUIS—MR. FRANCIS HORNER'S INCLINATION TOWARDS EXTREME OPINIONS—LORD GRENVILLE'S SPEECH IN SUPPORT OF MINISTERS AND THE WAR WITH BONAPARTE—THE PEACE PARTY—FOLLY OF SIR FRANCIS BURDETT—DEATH OF MR. WHITBREAD—THE PRINCESS OF WALES—THE PRINCE REGENT AND WALTER SCOTT.

CHAPTER V.

It was wonderful how smoothly the course of events proceeded after the departure of the Princess of Wales. Every where appeared a state of tranquillity, that contrasted most favourably with the strife and turmoil that had preceded it. The change seemed to spread from the Royal circle to the Government, from the Government to the Opposition, from the Opposition to the populace; ultimately, the influence was felt across the broad Atlantic, and before the year expired the voice of peace made itself heard in the United States. The new year, therefore, opened with the fairest promises at home and abroad. With Napoleon apparently reconciling himself to his small sovereignty at Elba, and the Princess of Wales in unrestricted enjoyment of her most cherished desires in a boundless field of adventure, England appeared left to the enjoyment of a perpetual calm.

In the month of January, a few members of the Grenville party assembled at Dropmore for the purpose of considering the plan of the forthcoming Parliamentary campaign. The Hon. George Ponsonby, the acknowledged leader of Opposition in the House of Commons, was present, and wrote from thence on the 25th, to Mr. Francis Horner, apprising him that his friends had been "talking over the first operations fit to take place upon the meeting of the House; and we have agreed that the best motion to begin with (upon notice) is our relation to America; and that the best form will be to move for Committee to enquire into the war." He goes on to state "the papers which have been published, and the peace which has been concluded since the adjournment, seem to render such a motion peculiarly expedient; for there can be no doubt that the feelings of the country must be strongly excited by the disclosure of the facts contained in those papers, and by the conclusion of a peace, justifiable only (in the opinion of those who concluded it) by necessity; a necessity arising solely from their own mismanagement of the war."*

It seems almost in the nature of such a contingency, as it affects British interests, that this country should sometimes realize the definition of a great Commander, that war is a game of blunders; but it would have been difficult, even for so practised a debater as Mr. Ponsonby, to have demonstrated how such mismanagement necessitated the peace that was concluded. It suited, however, a section of the Opposition to be as urgent for the preservation of this peace, as if war was now totally out of the list of probabilities. They insisted not only upon a dangerous reduction of the army,

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[1] "Memoirs and Correspondence of Francis Horner." Vol. II. p. 225.

but were equally imperative against keeping a part of the Militia embodied. More than one motion was brought before Parliament, early in the year, with the object of disembodying the entire Militia, which, fortunately for the country, was supported only by a small minority.

Of the various questions that agitated the public mind during the years 1814 and 1815, none created more excitement than that respecting the price and supply of corn. Legislation had endeavoured to protect the producer, while anticipating the change in prices which would be created by the establishment of peace; but the claims of the consumer to all the advantages of an almost unlimited supply from foreign sources, now war could place no obstacle on the transit of cheaply-raised grain, were vehemently brought forward in both Houses of Parliament, and clamorously insisted upon wherever there was a manufacturing population. Committees of inquiry were appointed, reports published, and the subject discussed over and over again, with the two-fold object of protecting the one party, and satisfying the other; but such a result, no amount of legislative wisdom could have produced. Large majorities in the Commons defeated every attempt that was made to sacrifice the interests of the agriculturists, and a Corn Bill, to fix the price of wheat at eighty shillings a quarter, and prohibit importation as long as it remained under that standard, was carried on the 10th of March, 1815, despite of the most violent oppesition, in-doors and out.

During the progress of the measure, immense mobs, in the highest state of excitement, thronged the thoroughfares to the Houses of Parliament, and did their utmost to intimidate such Members as would not advocate their views; the houses of some they visited in threatening crowds, and rarely departed without doing mischief to the windows or the furniture. More than once, the military were called out to quell these riots, and protect the persons and property thus assailed, and it was only with the greatest difficulty that the usual traffic of the streets was restored. The Bill was carried through the usual stages in the House of Lords, with the constant opposition of the leading Whigs, among whom the Marquis of Buckingham and Lord Grenville were conspicuous; and ultimately passed into a law, with the following "Protest," drawn up by Lord Grenville, assisted by the Marquis Wellesley.

PROTEST AGAINST THE CORN BILL OF 1815.

I. *Because* we are adverse in principle to all new restrictions on commerce. We think it certain, that public prosperity is best promoted by leaving uncontrolled the free current of national industry; and we wish, rather, by well-considered steps, to bring back our commercial legislation to the straight and simple line of wisdom, than to increase the deviation, by subjecting additional and extensive branches of the public interest to fresh symptoms of artificial and injurious restriction.

II. *Because* we think that the great practical rule of having all commerce unfettered, applies more peculiarly, and on still stronger grounds of justice, as well as of policy, to the Corn Trade, than to any other. Irresistible, indeed, must be the necessity which could, in our judgment, authorize the Legislature to tamper with the sustenance of the people, and to impede the free purchase and sale of that article on which depends the existence of so large a portion of the community.

III. *Because* we think that the expectations of ultimate benefit from this measure are founded on a delusive theory. We cannot persuade ourselves, that this law will ever contribute to produce plenty, cheapness, or steadiness of price. So long as it operates at all, its effects must be the opposite of these. Monopoly is the parent of scarcity, dearness, and of uncertainty. To cut off any of the sources of supply, can only tend to lessen its abundance—to close against ourselves the cheapest market for any commodity, must enhance the price at which we purchase it, and to consign the consumer of corn to the produce of his own country, is to refuse to ourselves the benefit of that provision which Providence itself has made for equalizing to man the variations of season and of climate.

IV. But whatever may be the future consequences of this law, at some distant and uncertain period, we see with pain, that those hopes must be purchased at the expense of great and present evils. To compel the consumer to purchase corn dearer at home than it might be imported from abroad, is the immediate practical effect of this law. In this way alone can it operate. Its present protection, its promised extension of Agriculture, must result (if at all) from the profits which it creates, by keeping up the price of corn to an artificial level. These future benefits are the consequences expected, but, as we confidently believe, erroneously expected, from giving a bounty to the grower of corn, by a tax levied on the consumer.

And on all these grounds, we are anxious to record our dissent from a measure so precipitate in its course, and, as we fear, so injurious in its consequences.

Augustus Frederick, (Duke of Sussex.)
William Frederick, (Duke of Gloucester.)
Torrington.
Dutton.
Chandos Buckingham.
Grenville.
Wellesley.
Essex.
Montfort.
King.
Carlisle.

The Marquis of Buckingham made a forcible address to the House of Lords, on the conduct which had been pursued towards the Genoese.

The Bank Restriction Act was discussed in this and the following month, as well as the renewal of the war, consequent on the escape of Bonaparte. On all these questions there was more or less opposition. Nor were the Opposition leaders quite agreed as to their line of policy; particularly as regards the war. Upon this point, Lord Grenville and Lord Grey, found that they could not coincide. The former, with the same patriotic spirit that had impelled him throughout the fierce struggle with Napoleon, was for vigorous hostilities —the latter, for non-intervention, and the maintenance of peace. This difference in the chiefs led to a division in the followers. Among others, Mr. Francis Horner, who had been returned by the influence of the Marquis of Buckingham, thought proper to adopt Lord Grey's opinion.[1]

What follows will be found to be much to the credit of all the parties concerned. In a letter to his father, in which he refers to this transaction, Mr. Horner says: "I was apprised by him (Lord Grey) of a correspondence that had passed between him and Lord Grenville, in which the latter, with that frankness and public integrity which mark every part of his political conduct, had sought occasion to put Lord Grey in possession of the whole of his opinions upon this new state of things. The result was, the statement, on Lord Grenville's side, of an opinion that the maintenance of peace with Bonaparte was impossible, and that our policy ought, therefore, to be a renewal of the concert of last year for immediate action; on Lord Grey's, the opinion that, even granting war to be unavoidable in the end, it is the duty and policy of this country, and of the Allies, to take every chance of maintaining the peace; and that a war immediately begun by an aggression against France, would both want the justification of aggression by France, and would involve the unjustifiable principle of interfering with the right of the French to choose their own Government."[1]

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[1] Romilly did the same. See his "Diary," Vol. III., p. 160.

Mr. Horner, having adopted the view taken by Lord Grey, and voted in accordance with it, felt embarrassed by the knowledge that he was indebted for his seat to the family of Lord Grenville, and no longer represented their opinions. With this impression, he put himself in communication both with Lord Grenville and his nephew.

MR. FRANCIS HORNER TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Lincoln's Inn, April 28, 1815.

My dear Lord,

In the course of a conversation which Lord Grenville had the kindness to seek with me some little time ago, for the purpose of stating to me his views of the new conjuncture in which our foreign politics are placed by the late calamitous reverse of affairs, I took that opportunity of requesting that he would have the goodness to mention to your Lordship, that I unfortunately found myself differing upon the question of peace or immediate war, from the sentiments which I understood were entertained by your Lordship. I cannot, however, but fear that by too long a delay in making this communication myself, I may have prevented your Lordship, in your kindness and delicacy towards me, from proposing the new arrangement which such circumstances suggest. The vote of last night upon Whitbread's motion, in which I concurred, brought us in the House of Commons to the crisis of those discussions which are rendered unavoidable by the present relations of this country; and there seems very little reason now to expect, that any change in those relations can prevent the difference of opinion which exists, from being permanently marked by the public, in the daily recurrence of parliamentary questions in which that difference of opinion must be acted upon in debate as well as votes. As I have hitherto taken no part in them but by my vote, I am very anxious not to leave your Lordship in any uncertainty respecting the extent of my opinions as evinced by that I gave last night in support of Whitbread's motion.

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[1] "Horner's Memoirs and Correspondence," Vol. ii. p. 247.

I have ever expressed to your Lordship the sense of grateful obligation which I have felt, and shall ever continue to feel, for your kind and partial distinction of me in conferring upon me the most valuable of all services. If any conduct of mine could tend to show me worthy of that kind preference by your Lordship, I know it would be in my wish to continue the important trust only so long as I can reconcile the discharge of it to my own ideas, however imperfect they may be, of what is good and safe for the country. Having given notice of two motions, the last of which stands for Thursday next, I am desirous of performing these engagements; after which, I shall make every other consideration give way to that of consulting your Lordship's wishes and convenience.

Believe me, my dear Lord, with the most sincere attachment,

Your faithful and obliged,
Francis Horner.

The Marquis returned this reply.

THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM TO MR. FRANCIS HORNER.

Buckingham House, April 29, 1815.

MY DEAR SIR,

I do not lose a moment in answering your letter. I was quite sure that the honourable and delicate feelings of your mind would induce you to make the offer which you have done; and Lord Grenville did ample justice to those feelings in detailing to me the conversation to which you advert. In contributing my assistance to your parliamentary objects, I was actuated by a sincere wish to be the means of giving the public the advantage of great talents and pure honourable feelings, in the House of Commons. I have derived the warmest satisfaction from the experience of the entire success of that wish; and I shall feel the greatest regret if a continuance of the expression of these honourable feelings on your part should render the carrying into effect of the measure you advert to in your letter, necessary for your own satisfaction.

I will freely confess to you that I will not relinquish the anxious hope which I entertain that the present difference of opinion which exists between us on one subject, will not lead to a continual difference in our public line of conduct. I am happy to say that I see many reasons why such a result need not take place. Last night's vote does not in the least weaken those hopes, or change that opinion. Should, contrary to my hopes and expectations, events take that turn which may render such a radical and continual difference of opinion necessary, as may make it irksome to yourself to express those opinions whilst holding your present seat, in that case I will accept the offer so honourably tendered by you now. But assure yourself that I shall do it with the deepest regret, as

I look forward to a continuance of a connection between us, so gratifying and so advantageous to myself, with an anxiety that will make me eager to postpone to the last possible moment consistent with your own feelings, the doing anything which, though it may prove difference of public opinion, never can diminish the sincere regard with which I am,

My dear Sir,
Yours very faithfully and sincerely,
CHANDOS BUCKINGHAM.

Mr. Horner, in stating the particulars of this correspondence to his father, dwells, with a high sense of gratification, upon the liberality with which he had been treated.[1] The Marquis of Buckingham and Lord Grenville had acted, in this transaction, in conformity with the enlightened and generous policy they had advocated throughout their lives. Their political *protégé* was possessed of too much genuine ability and worth, to be left to connect himself with the extreme section of Opposition, which he must have done, had he given up his seat. He appeared desirous of distinguishing himself by so marked an hostility to Government, that, at a little later date, one of his ablest and worthiest friends, Lord Webb Seymour, wrote to him a long and earnest remonstrance. From that letter we cannot avoid quoting the following striking passage:

"Opposition in Parliament is generally conducted upon one very false principle; namely, that the measures of Ministers must, in every case, be so far wrong, as to deserve upon the whole, very severe reprobation. I will not suppose this principle to be speculatively recognised; but it seems, at least, to be practically adopted. Now it is plain, that where a set of men have the good of the country mainly at heart, and have tolerable capacities for business, though their talents be neither profound nor brilliant, and though their principles lean rather more than what is right in favour of the Crown, yet their measures must, in all probability, be often as good as circumstances will admit of, and sometimes entitled to praise for unusual prudence or magnanimity. On such occasions, justice is, for the most part, denied them altogether by the Opposition side of the House; or if praise is bestowed at all, it is bestowed in feeble terms, and with reservations much insisted on; but what is denied them in Parliament, is granted by an impartial public without doors, with proportionate disgust at the bitter and unremitting censures of factious enmity. Upon this point, I must add, that I heard it said, (by a friend too), that you hurt yourself in the opinion of the public, by some want of candour towards the latter part of the last Session."[1]

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[1] "Diary and Correspondence," Vol. II., p. 254.

On the 25th of April, the Marquis of Buckingham, in the House of Peers, again brought forward the subject of the transfer of Genoa to the King of Sardinia, and reflected severely on the conduct of the Government in this transaction. On the 25th of May, an important discussion arose in the House of Lords, on the consideration of a message from the Regent, respecting the Treaties entered into with the Allies against the common enemy, when Lord Grenville delivered a very eloquent speech in support of Ministers, and the war with Bonaparte. "Let them," he said, "show him one country in Europe that had sought security in a peace with Bonaparte, and that had not found its evils aggravated when that treaty came to be put in force. When the very existence of his own country was depending, he could only trust to certainties; for the return of Bonaparte showed more strongly his inordinate and unconquerable ambition than any former act of his life." Lord Grey proposed an amendment to the Address, but could only collect 44 votes. Lord Grenville supported the Address, and it was carried by 156 votes. An equally stirring debate took place, the same day, in the House of Commons, where Sir Francis Burdett, and Messrs. Ponsonby and Tierney strove to persuade their hearers that the war was unjust; but its necessity was fully made out by Lord Castlereagh, Lord Milton, Messrs. Grattan and Charles Williams Wynne. Here the supporters of an amendment mustered 92—those for the Address, 331.

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[1] "Memoirs and Correspondence of Francis Horner," Vol. II., p. 324.

The crowning victory of Waterloo put an end to all the arguments of those very short-sighted politicians who had used their best exertions to cripple their country, when all her physical power was necessary for carrying her through the struggle with which she was even then menaced. The force and truth of Lord Grenville's arguments were demonstrated in the long peace, and extraordinary prosperity that followed. Notwithstanding the unanswerable character of this precedent, there are still to be found orators who persist in crying, "Peace! peace! where there is no peace," and insist in denouncing that war as unjust, the object of which is precisely similar to the great conflict that terminated at Waterloo.

That section of the Opposition which had opposed the resumption of hostilities were so little pleased with the successful result, that they used every possible exertion to leave an opening for another war. The interest that some of them affected to take in the Imperial captive, amounted to an extravagance scarcely credible. "Sir Francis Burdett called on me this morning," writes Sir Samuel Romilly, "and told me that, *if moving for a writ of habeas corpus would procure him his liberty*, or in any way be useful to him, he would stand forward to do it. I told him that I thought that Bonaparte could not possibly derive any benefit from such a proceeding."[1]

Before the close of the Session (July 12), an event occurred that excited an extraordinary sensation, both in and out of Parliament. This was the death of Mr. Whitbread by his own hand. An excitable temperament had gradually produced a morbid state of irritability that finally betrayed itself in fits of melancholy mania, during one of which he terminated his existence. He had long held a distinguished position among the extreme section of Opposition; and in private life was regarded with sincere affection and respect. The Marquis of Tavistock made a feeling address to the House of Commons, on their loss, when moving for a new writ for the borough of Bedford; and Mr. Wilberforce and the Chancellor of the Exchequer, added their testimony of his worth.

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[1] "Diary," Vol. III., p. 192.

Later in the year an incident of a totally different character, excited quite as great a sensation. This was the nuptials of the Duke of Cumberland and the Duchess of Salms. They had previously been married on the continent.

Very little was now thought about the absent Princess of Wales. A letter, dated July, 1815, apparently from Sir William Gell, when mentioning the Princess, affirms: "In London it is as though such a being never existed. Things appear to be going on smoothly at Court; that is to say, no fault is found with the Regent. He is heartily glad at the Princess's absence."[1] The quotation deserves notice for its frank reference to cause and effect. The stormy and discreditable element of the Court had been removed; everything was tranquil; and there remained no cause of complaint.

Mr. Lockhart has preserved a lively account of a dinner which the Prince gave in honour of Walter Scott in the spring of this year, when the latter was on one of his visits to the great metropolis. On hearing of his anticipated arrival, the Prince kindly said to Mr. Croker: "Let me know when he comes; and I'll get up a snug little dinner that will just suit him." He arrived a day or two afterwards; and the "snug dinner" came off in due time. A pleasant party assembled to enjoy it, consisting of the Prince and his guest, the Duke of York, the Marquis of Huntley, (afterwards Duke of Gordon), Lord Yarmouth (afterwards Marquis of Hertford), Earl of Fife, Lord Melville, Right Honourable J. W. Croker (Secretary to the Admiralty), and Mr. Adam, (afterwards Lord Chief Commissioner of the Jury Court in Scotland). On arranging with the latter, who had for some time held a confidential post in the household, his Royal Highness said: "Let us have just a few friends of his own, and the more Scotch the better."

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[1] "Diary of the Times of George IV.," Vol. III., p. 82.

According to the account of the convivial scene that followed, from which we quote, it is scarcely possible to decide which most distinguished himself on the occasion, the royal host or his talented guest.[1] This, however, is certain, that each left on the mind of the other a very powerful impression of his intellectual and social qualities. Probably, the Prince was never seen to such advantage; and the honour his Royal Highness conferred on literature, in the person of one of the most celebrated of its professors, was eminently characteristic of his warm and generous nature when obeying a natural impulse.

This memorable dinner was followed by another, in which patron and guest more thoroughly "fraternized" under the spirit of sociality, sung capital songs, and told capital jokes, in amicable rivalry; and before the delighted author started on his homeward journey, the Prince sent through Mr. Adam, a gold snuff-box, with his medallion set in brilliants, as a testimony of the high opinion his Royal Highness entertained of Walter Scott's genius and merit. As the testimony of a host so liberal and gracious, by his grateful guest, might be thought open to challenge, the latter wisely avoided expressing it. When asked his opinion of the talents of the Prince, "He declined giving any definite answer, but repeated that he was the first gentleman he had seen—certainly the first *English* gentleman of his day. There was something about him which, independently of the *prestige*, the 'divinity' which hedges a king, marked him as standing entirely by himself; but as to his abilities, spoken of as distinct from his charming manners, how could any one form a fair judgment of the man who introduced whatever subject he chose, discussed it just as long as he chose, and dismissed it when he chose."[1]

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[1] "Life of Sir Walter Scott," Vol. III., p. 341.

The abilities of the Prince Regent, when he allowed them fair play, corresponded with his courtesy and his *bonhommie*. Many of the ablest men of his age, as diplomatists, statesmen, scholars, and philosophers, after a conversation devoted to their own department of knowledge, have left his presence with a high opinion of his intelligence.

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[1] Lockhart's "Life of Scott," Vol. III., p. 344.

CHAPTER VI.

[1815.]

POSITION OF ENGLAND AT THE TERMINATION OF THE WAR — LORD CASTLEREAGH'S PEACE ADMINISTRATION—THE FINANCIAL STATE OF THE COUNTRY—LOUIS XVIII. AND THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM—LORD GRENVILLE'S OPINION ON DUGALD STEWART, AND VINDICATION OF LOCKE—THE PRINCESS OF WALES AT NAPLES AND GENOA—HER IMPROPER CONDUCT—TREATY OF PARIS—THE ENGLISH IN FRANCE—THE HOLY ALLIANCE.

CHAPTER VI.

At the conclusion of the war, the position of England was one which could equally excite the pride and the apprehension of her more intelligent sons. The long and arduous struggle the Empire had carried on in defence of European liberty, must have raised her to the highest eminence in the scale of nations, wherever the stirring incidents of that colossal contest had penetrated. She had nobly maintained her old dominion of the seas against the most formidable coalitions of the other maritime powers, till the latter could no longer launch a fleet capable of contending with her navy; and after the most powerful States of Europe had succumbed to the vast resources and extraordinary military genius of the modern Alexander, she had sent armies to the defence of some of these prostrate nationalities, and material assistance to others, till his enormous empire gradually collapsed, and the despotism that menaced the world, remained harmless in the custody of the circling billows of the Atlantic.

The Prospero of the tempest which had been acted on the stage of Europe, assuredly had fairly earned a title to some of those blessings that, through his agency, had given a happy termination to the drama. He soon found that, great as had been the energies he had bestowed on satisfying the demands of war, a more Herculean task lay before him, to reconcile England and the Continent to the still more importunate claims of peace. What was to be done, bore a modest proportion to what was to be undone; what was to be adjusted, was in similar relation to what was to be discovered, realized, or created. The prolonged strife had overfed some interests at the expense of others; our glory had accumulated by absorbing nutriment from various sources, the exhaustion of which now loudly called for replenishment and protection. The watchful Minister must have observed that a strong reaction was likely to create a moral *delirium tremens*, arising from a series of intoxicating triumphs, that threatened to bring the exhausted patient to the lowest verge of despondency and gloom. The nation had been drinking deep of prosperity. According to an eminent historical authority, "The revenue raised by taxation within the year had risen from £19,000,000, in 1792, to £72,000,000, in 1815: the total expenditure, from taxes and loans, had reached, in 1814 and 1815, the enormous amount of £117,000,000 each year. In the latter years of the war, Great Britain had above 1,000,000 of men in arms, in Europe and Asia; and besides paying the whole of these immense armaments, she was able to lend £11,000,000 yearly to the Continental Powers; yet were these copious bleedings so far from having exhausted the capital or resources of the country, that the loan of 1814, although of the enormous amount of £35,000,000, was obtained at the rate of £4 11*s.* 1*d.* per cent., being a lower rate of interest than had been paid at the commencement of the war. The exports, which, in 1792, were £27,000,000, had swelled, in 1815, to nearly £58,000,000, official value: the imports had advanced, during the same period, from £19,000,000 to £32,000,000. The shipping had increased from 1,000,000 to 2,500,000 tons. The population of England had risen from 9,400,000, in 1792, to 13,400,000 in 1815; that of Great Britain and Ireland, from 14,000,000 in the former period, to 18,000,000 in the latter."[1]

Great as had been the expansion of her resources, as large had become that of her wants; and the cessation of hostilities appeared to afford the most favourable opportunity for their development. Politicians of every grade came forward with evils that demanded instant remedy, or panaceas that called for immediate application. The constitution that had aided in producing an unexampled prosperity was declared to be scarcely worthy of further existence, and a shoal of new theories and promising speculations were launched upon the tide of public opinion, by way of substitute.

As the leader in the House of Commons, Lord Castlereagh had to bear the brunt of Opposition attacks upon the Government, by the various representatives of liberal constituencies, who sought the reputation of political reformers, by advocating such measures as Universal Suffrage, Annual Parliaments, and Vote by Ballot. Other schemes, of a more or less speculative character, were also broached in the House, and sometimes created animated discussions. The leading Minister endured no slight amount of labour in listening to and disposing of these popular appeals. No man knew better the defects, and requirements of the constitution; and few men, even in the foremost ranks of the liberals, were more liberally disposed: but he doubted that, at a period still feeling the impulse of a great excitement, and with a population now passing under the irritating effects of an important change, there was sufficient security against the evil consequences likely to arise from sudden and comprehensive alterations of long-established laws.

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[1] Alison's "History of Europe from the Fall of Napoleon," Vol. I., p. 86.

Among the subjects that attracted his attention, the financial state of the country was one of the foremost; nor did he fail to pursue its connection with the value and demand of labour. He felt that a great crisis had arrived, and that, while the nation was struggling through it, it was not the time to increase the excitement by countenancing speculative theories in politics, and unwarrantable experiments in legislation. Under such circumstances, it was impossible that he should acquire any large amount of popularity: indeed, when obliged, subsequently, to put forth the powers of the executive to maintain order and support the laws, he experienced very considerable odium. This, however, never affected the performance of his duties. He proceeded on his course, equally unaffected by good report and ill; devoting himself to the advancement of the real interests of the country, at home and abroad; and, in a manner as free from ostentation as from deception, preparing great and lasting benefits for every class of his fellow-subjects within the empire.

Louis XVIII, as well as other members of the Royal Family of France were largely indebted to the Marquis of Buckingham for pecuniary assistance, as well as for the most liberal hospitality. Those sums were never repaid; nor did the King of France ever find an opportunity to return at Paris the princely entertainments the almost friendless exile had received at Stowe. His Majesty, however, bore them in mind; for, when Lord Grenville forwarded, through the Duke of Wellington, a copy of the splendid edition of Homer which had been published under the auspices of the head of the Grenville family, he acknowledged his obligations, according to the following trustworthy authority.

THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON TO LORD GRENVILLE.

Paris, November 27, 1815.

MY DEAR LORD,

I received a few days ago your Lordship's letter of October the 28th, and since, the edition of Homer, which the messenger had left behind him; and, having requested the King to give me an audience, I have this day presented it to him.

The King was much gratified by your present, and expressed in strong terms, his recollection of and gratitude for the kindness with which he had been treated by your Lordship's family in England. I assure you that I have had the greatest pleasure in obeying your commands upon this occasion.

Believe me, &c.,
WELLINGTON.

Prominent among the more important contributions to science published towards the close of the year, was the now well-known "Dissertation," written by Dugald Stewart, as a preliminary discourse to a supplement to the "Encyclopædia Britannica." It was not long before this sterling production was appreciated by scholars and men of science, for whom it was scarcely possible to offer anything more acceptable than its perusal. The following letters show how warm an admirer the philosopher found in one of the ablest statesmen of his age.

LORD GRENVILLE TO MR. FRANCIS HORNER.

Camelford House, December 6, 1815.

MY DEAR SIR,

Having been called to town for a few days, I found on my table the copy of Professor Stewart's "Dissertation." I read it with the eargerness which the subject and his name would naturally create; and I have received from it a degree of delight and instruction only such as few books indeed have ever afforded me.

It was not till last night that your letter followed me up from the country, and informed me to whom I was indebted for so valuable a present; and this must be my apology for not having sooner thanked you for it. With all my admiration of it, I do not acquiesce in all he says here and elsewhere of Oxford. It may be the effect of prejudice; but I confidently believe that he thinks of our institutions and studies there, less favourably than we deserve, and than he would himself think of us if he were better acquainted with the facts. He has also brought against us a charge—that of expelling Locke—which certainly is not historically true; and I believe I shall be tempted to trouble him, through you (if you will allow it), with a very short note, to place that transaction in what I conceive to be its true light. Not that any of us is much concerned to vindicate what our predecessors did a century and a half ago, but because historical truth is valuable, even as to the minutest facts; and still more so when it concerns the conduct of public bodies.

When I got your letter, I was on the point of writing to you, to express how happy you would make us if you could contrive to pass any part, the longer the better, of your Christmas holidays at Dropmore.

Ever, my dear Sir,
Most truly yours,
GRENVILLE.

The Chancellor of Oxford was jealous of the honour of his University, and could not rest tranquil under a charge so heavy as the expulsion of the author of the renowned "Essay on the Conduct of the Understanding;" but it was not till 1829, that he published his able tract on the subject, entitled "Oxford and Locke," which fully vindicates the University. He there quotes a letter written by him to Mr. Horner, dated December 14, 1815, which was transmitted to Dugald Stewart, and the philosopher's reply. Two or three days, however, before the date of his communication, he again addressed Mr. Horner as follows:

LORD GRENVILLE TO MR. FRANCIS HORNER.

Dropmore, December 10, 1815.

MY DEAR SIR,

The time you mention will be perfectly convenient for our having the pleasure of seeing you here. Since I have returned here, I have entered upon a second and more deliberate reading of Stewart's "Dissertation." I am afraid you will not think very highly of my judgment in selecting for observation, amidst such a mass of the most valuable matter, a slight and incidental reference to an almost forgotten anecdote. But something must be allowed for local attachment; and I have no doubt of satisfying you, when I see you, that the act in question was in no respect what Stewart represents it, the act of the University, but solely and exclusively the act of that profligate and ambitious Jesuit whom Locke had offended by his attachment to Lord Shaftesbury. It is in that light that Fox represents it, drawing from it its proper historical inference, that of the insecurity even of the most obscure stations, under the tyranny of such a Government.

Ever most truly yours,
GRENVILLE.

At the Court of Naples, the Princess of Wales found congenial society,[1] but soon left for Nice. Lady

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[1] "La Reine est extrêmement jolie," she informs her friend, "spirituelle, fort affable, et fait les honneurs de la cour parfaitement bien. Le Roi est beau, gai, poli, toujours gracieux, et faisant toujours

Charlotte Campbell wrote to advise the Princess to return to England; but this was very far from being her intention. Thence they proceeded together to Genoa, where she lived in a palace, and is thus described by her friend. "She had no rouge on, wore tidy shoes, was grown rather thinner, and looked altogether uncommonly well. The first person who opened the door to me," adds Lady Charlotte, "was *the one* whom it was impossible to mistake, *hearing what is reported*—six feet high, a magnificent head of black hair, pale complexion, mustachios which reach from here to London. Such is *the Stork*; but, of course, I only appeared to take him for an upper servant." He was certainly a domestic, and was the cause of the desertion of her English attendants. Lady Charlotte continues: "The Princess took me aside, and told me all that was true—and a great deal that was not. The same decoction of mingled falsehood and truth is in use, as heretofore. Oh! that some one would break the vial, and spill the vile liquid which she is using to her own destruction in this world, as well as in the next." The Princess was furious about the desertion of Sir William Gell and Keppel Craven, and, frankly adds her confidante, "began telling me such stories of them as made me sick, and that I in no way believe; which immediately proved

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des actions généreux; car il est le Dieu de la bienfaisance. Je me trouve bien ici sur tous les rapports. La société est excellente, beaucoup de beaux Messieurs, et infiniment de jolies dames à la cour du Roi et de la Reine." A few weeks afterwards she wrote, "Je déteste Naples, et ne compte jamais d'y retourner, sur tous les rapports, mais, enfin, bouche close pour ce moment."

to me that she was lying from the littleness of her heart."[1]

The Princess, whenever she made her appearance in public, became ludicrously conspicuous, in a showy equipage drawn by cream-coloured ponies, her handsome courier riding on one side of the carriage in great state, and another man in a similar theatrical costume riding on the other side. According to the same authority, the conversation sanctioned was of the following character. "He [a Mr. R.] was made to relate a story which was the most horrid—not fit for the lowest or most immoral society.[2] The writer adds: "Lady C. C. [Charlotte Campbell] and Lady G—e [Glenbervie] did not know which way to look; and their distress made us all look grave, which displeased the Princess; and her countenance was immediately overspread with a scowl, which is always very painful to witness. I cannot conceive how a man of any taste or feeling could be persuaded by any royalty to utter such things in the hearing of any woman; and I doubt if the ladies should not have risen and left the room." They had no business there.

From Genoa, the Princess proceeded to Milan, where bad as her conduct had hitherto been, it became worse. "I am afraid she is going to destruction," writes one of her friends. "Not an English attendant left; and the vile Italian cormorants are ruining her, both as to finance and reputation." Surely as regards the latter, the ruin must have been complete long since.

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[1] "Diary of the Times of George IV.," Vol. II., p. 195.

[2] "Diary," Vol. II., p. 230.

"The Treaty of Paris," (November 15, 1815,) which was one of the great historical features of this memorable year, demands a slight notice in these pages, as the last scene of that great European drama on which the curtain had just fallen. Some of the Allies, as at Vienna in the preceding year, seemed anxious to turn the humiliation of France, as much as possible, to their own advantage: but the representatives of England interposed, and exerted all their influence to prevent the degradation and spoliation which those Powers that had suffered most from French preponderance, in their turn, sought to inflict. It is impossible to imagine generosity, in a nation, carried to a greater height than the Duke of Wellington and Lord Castlereagh exhibited on behalf of the British Empire, when they prevented her prostrate enemy from being too completely a victim to the law of retaliation.

Every one had suffered terribly either from Republican or Imperial France, and every one seemed to thirst for a corresponding revenge; the sacrifices, the sufferings of England throughout this long and terrible war, had, perhaps, been as great as those endured by any of the Continental States, though her soil had been unpolluted by the presence of the invader; but the cause of these evils having been removed, and the nation by whom Napoleon had been supported in his aggressions having become powerless for offence, it did not enter into the English idea of justice that the territory of her ally, the new Sovereign of France, should be curtailed, so as to diminish the monarchy he claimed by inheritance, or render him, as the cause of a national dishonour, intolerable in the eyes of his subjects.

Still, the course of the conqueror had been one so entirely of spoliation, that the claim of restitution, which it was impossible to resist, could not fail of being one of enormous amount.[1] Napoleon's decrees and confiscations inflicted as direct a loss on Great Britain, as his forced contributions on the states entered by his armies, while her war expenses of every kind were infinitely more than the aggregate of these claims from all the countries he had invaded.[2] Yet England was satisfied with a partial recompense for the expense incurred in her last armaments.

Lord Castlereagh and the Duke of Wellington exerted themselves to prevent reprisals on the inhabitants of Paris by the Allies, for what they had suffered when the French army was in possession of their capitals. A letter from the former to Lord Liverpool, states the difficulty they had with Blücher, who, not satisfied with levying an enormous contribution, had mined the Bridge of Jena, preparatory to its destruction.[1] Among other proofs of English liberality, was the restoration of the works of art to the countries whence they had been taken, instead of sharing them with the Allies, by the same right that had placed them in Paris.

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[1] "There is an estimate of these forced requisitions by the French since the Revolution, preserved in the "Castlereagh Despatches," Vol. x., p. 393, the sum total of which amounts to 9,126,684,581 livres de France. The amount, as given by Alison, "History of Europe from the fall of Napoleon," Vol. I., p. 215, is 735,500,000 francs, or £29,500,000, but does not include Spain, Portugal, and other states from which similar plunder was obtained.

[2] "The amount of subsidies paid by England during little more than twelve months of the years 1815-16, to different nations, was £12,421,058 14s. 2d.—"Castlereagh Despatches," Vol. xi., p. 171. The sum granted for the services of the army, navy, and ordnance for about the same period, was £67,082,341.—Ibid, p. 26.

The conduct of the Prussians during the occupation of France by the Allies, after the Battle of Waterloo, was everywhere the same. The officers imitated their General, and the soldiers, therefore, could not be expected to show a more decided sense of self-respect. Sir Walter Scott, in one of his letters from France to the Duke of Buccleugh, relates his own experience of their discreditable proceedings. "As for the Prussians," he writes, "a party of cavalry dined at our hotel at Mons, eat and drank of the best the poor devils had left to give, called for their horses, and laughed in the face of the landlord when he offered his bill, telling him they should pay as they came back.[2] The English, they say," adds the gifted writer, "have always paid honourably, and upon these they *indemnify themselves.*" The honesty of our countrymen was, no doubt, the best policy, but it proved a very dear one; for it caused them to pay three times the value of every purchase, to make amends for the plunder of their Allies.

Another incident, described in the same work, is worthy of a place here, not only in contrast to the preceding, but as singularly characteristic of the truly great man, whose liberality conferred on France many important obligations. It appears that Lady Castlereagh—one of the most accomplished and amiable women of her time—gave her numerous friends then in France a rustic treat, in the shape of an excursion to Ermenonville, with a banquet *al fresco;* and Field-Marshal Blücher was one of the company. A troop of donkeys being required to carry the ladies, a messenger was sent to a neighbouring village, but returned without them, expressing, in unmeasured terms, his sense of the extortionate charge demanded. The Prussian Commander grimly nodded to a subordinate, who hastened to a neighbouring picket, and, in a miraculously short time, three times the requisite number of animals appeared, driven by half-a-dozen hussars, followed by the population of the village in a terrible state of excitement; and "an angry man was Blücher," says Scott, "when Lord Castlereagh condescended to go amongst them, all smiles, and sent them back with more Napoleons than perhaps the fee-simple of the whole stud was worth."[1]

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[1] "Castlereagh Despatches," Vol. x., p. 419.

[2] Lockhart's "Life of Scott," Vol. III., p. 364. In a subsequent letter to Joanna Baillie, Sir Walter has preserved an amusing picture of the rapacity of the Prussians and Russians.

Scott's opinion of the state and prospects of France, at this period, was sound and true. "France is, at present," he wrote to Joanna Baillie, "the fabled giant, struggling, or rather lying supine, under the load of mountains which have been precipitated on her; but she is not, and cannot be crushed. Remove the incumbent weight of 600,000 or 700,000 foreigners, and she will soon stand upright—happy, if experience shall have taught her to be contented, to exert her natural strength only for her own protection, and not for the annoyance of her neighbours."

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[1] Lockhart's "Life of Scott," Vol. III., p. 371.

The moderation of England was not without its influence on her Allies, and finally, they agreed to leave France as she existed in 1790, with some exceptions, that gave her an increase of territory of forty square leagues. The restitutions in money were necessarily extremely heavy exactions, though very much less than the sums which might have been claimed: the entire demand on France amounted to £61,500,000. In addition, the principal frontier fortresses were to be garrisoned by the Allies, who were to furnish 150,000 men (Great Britain contributing 30,000), to be clothed and maintained by the French Government, for not less than three, nor more than five years. Of this force, the Duke of Wellington was unanimously appointed to the supreme command.[1]

Another treaty, which followed the one just described, was entered into by Russia, Prussia, Austria, and England, and signed five days later. It is remarkable for having an object, that had been equally cared for in previous treaties, which a singular and unexpected chain of events, of recent occurrence, has completely defeated. Indeed, so complete is the change that both the policy and the sentiments of the last of these great Powers have undergone, that its Government and people are now eagerly and zealously intent on reversing its principal provision—"Les Hautes Puissances renouvellent et confirment particulièrement l'exclusion à perpétuité de Napoléon Bonaparte, *et de sa famille.*" It also provided for the military occupation of France, and for an additional force to maintain the existing order of things, should it be required; and the Four Powers agreed to bring the whole of their armies into the field, should their contingents be found insufficient to establish order.

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[1] "See the account of this treaty by Sir Archibald Alison, "History of Europe from the Fall of Napoleon," Vol. I., p. 214; also the letters of Viscount Castlereagh to the Earl of Liverpool. "Castlereagh Despatches," Vol. X.

There was a third Treaty entered into by the Allies, about the same time. It was long known and quoted throughout Europe by its title, "The Holy Alliance," a title which the professions of the parties to it claimed, rather than deserved. A slight knowledge of the traditional policy of the three important States that put forward its articles as a kind of profession of faith and practice, would suffice to show the real value of such instruments; antecedent and subsequent events have proved how little either Russia, Austria, or Prussia cared to act in the spirit of those sublime principles of government which they there ventured to enunciate. The characters of the potentates who signed this curious document were too well known in the British Empire, to allow of much reliance being placed in their high-sounding declaration; but some time elapsed before it became generally understood that it was nothing more nor less than a temporary hallucination of the most absolute sovereigns in Germany, who had been seeing visions, and dreaming dreams, that had no better foundation than the mystic inspiration of a certain Madame Krudener—a sort of Russian Cassandra, in whom the Czar placed implicit faith, and treated with the most affectionate confidence. Lord Castlereagh was not deluded by their visionary ideas, and the Prince Regent declined to endorse them. The Holy Alliance had one important effect: it maintained a secret relationship between the members of it, that survived long after the convention they had signed had become a dead letter.

CHAPTER VII.

[1816.]

EVIL EFFECTS OF THE RETURN OF PEACE ON MANUFACTURES AND TRADE—THE PRINCESS OF WALES IN ITALY—INCREASING POPULARITY OF THE PRINCE REGENT AND OF HIS GOVERNMENT—THE SPEECH FROM THE THRONE ON THE OPENING OF PARLIAMENT — LORD GRENVILLE'S SPEECH ON THE ADDRESS — THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM AND LORD NUGENT OPPOSE AN ENORMOUS MILITARY ESTABLISHMENT IN TIME OF PEACE — MOTION OF THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM ON THE STATE OF IRELAND—MR. CANNING APPOINTED PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF CONTROL—MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM BRINGS FORWARD A MOTION ON THE EVILS OF ALLOWING THE MILITARY TO PERFORM THE DUTIES OF CONSTABULARY — MARRIAGE OF THE PRINCESS CHARLOTTE—CHARACTER OF THE PRINCESS—DESIGNS OF THE CZAR — RIOTS — PROSECUTION OF SIR ROBERT WILSON, AND MESSRS. BRUCE AND HUTCHINSON, FOR ASSISTING M. LAVALETTE TO ESCAPE—LORD CASTLEREAGH'S INTERVENTION.

CHAPTER VII.

THE reign of peace appeared now to have fairly commenced. Not only was it general in Europe, but its blessings were equally secured to America. These benefits, however, were accompanied in England with evils that rendered them of very questionable advantage. The sudden cessation of the war had a marked effect upon prices, and lessened the demand for various articles of consumption and of manufacture, that had afforded employment to many workmen, and profit to many masters. This occasioned considerable distress in several parts of the kingdom, and afforded an opening to popular demagogues for declaiming against Government. A mischievous agitation was raised in several parts of the kingdom which, before the close of the year, more than once broke out into open riot. The measures that were rendered necessary to put down these disturbances, were represented by such orators, as tyrannical and unconstitutional in the highest degree. Fortunately, the executive always found itself strong enough to repress outrage, if they were not always vigilant enough to prevent it; and society went on in its ordinary course, profiting but little from either Hunt's inflammatory harangues, or Cobbett's abusive discourses.

The Legislature had witnessed some stirring discussions; but they had been conducted with an increased regard for decorum, since that source of exaggerated detestation and extravagant malice had removed herself out of the sphere of its influence. Rumours continued to reach England that the proceedings of the Princess of Wales had become more open to censure, than the conduct that had already so effectually damaged her reputation. She was still in Italy, and the following graphic description of her travelling suite by one of her Royal Highness's female friends, will no doubt amuse the reader. "At a small place called Borgo St. Domino, three days' journey from hence (Florence) what was my surprise to come up to *a whole rabble rout* belonging to the Princess of Wales. This consisted of twenty-four persons in all, in six carriages, and a baggage-waggon. I saw no face that I knew—many Italians and strange-looking persons of various nations—one fat woman. I heard there was one other female, but did not see her. Some said it was the Princess herself; but I do not believe it was. There were seven *piebald horses, and two little cream-coloured ponies*, that I well remember to have seen at Milan, and two very fine horses that drew a chariot, which was entirely covered up. On passing one of the servants, who had a better appearance than the rest, and seemed one of the principal persons, I enquired after her Royal Highness's health, and expressed myself happy to hear she was well, but asked no other questions whatever. My servants told me that some of these persons declared they were going to join their mistress at Pisa; others said, they were going to the sea-coast to embark for America; others, that her Royal Highness was at Rome. But they all differed in their statements, and were evidently *a low set of people.* Many of the women were dressed up like *itinerant show-players.*"

The Princess Charlotte, in the mean time, had been living somewhat in seclusion, but evidently with no disadvantage. Her marriage with the Prince of Orange, thanks to her amiable friend the Grand-Duchess, had been entirely broken off; and she was now left, "the world before her, where to choose."

As her Royal Highness had shown herself somewhat difficult to please, the duty of selecting a husband for her, was one of serious responsibility. There were not many families in Europe, that could produce a suitable partner for one so near in succession to the throne of Great Britain. But it was highly desirable that a suitable partner should be found; and, as the grand stumbling-block in the way of the first experiment had been removed, the Minister on whom the duty devolved might entertain hopes of success. The Prince of Wales had certainly advanced in popularity since his acceptance of the Regency. The *fêtes* in which he had assisted, to do honour to his illustrious visitors, had placed his Royal Highness in a favourable position, at a highly favourable time. Much was said about his affability, his graceful manners, and his refined taste, in recognition of which he received the title of "the first gentleman in Europe." Carlton Palace became the head-quarters of wit and genius; and his Royal Highness made many efforts at patronage in the direction of worth and merit.

His Government shared in the measure of approval, that the more influential portion of the community accorded to their royal master. It began to be generally suspected, that men who had contrived to bring about so prodigious a triumph for the British empire, and placed the country in so elevated a position among European powers of the first class, could not be the very incompetent persons they had sometimes been represented. Some looked into the private characters of the Prince's chief advisers, and were forced to confess that men of such irreproachable characters had rarely filled places of public trust. With regard to ministerial capacity, it was equally undeniable that more than one member of the Government had evinced high administrative and diplomatic talent, under circumstances demanding the co-operation of other qualities, quite as essential to success. The important public services of Viscount Castlereagh, would have given stability and influence to a much weaker Administration. It is not surprising, therefore, that the Prince Regent and his Government should, at the beginning of 1816, have enjoyed a fair share of public estimation.

Parliament commenced on the 1st of February, by a speech from the throne, read by the Lord Chancellor. It commenced with congratulations for our splendid and decisive successes, and then alluded to the many difficulties that arose in the adjustment of the necessary arrangements. The Treaties entered into with the Allies, and the measures they had been obliged to adopt to preserve the peace of Europe, were then referred to. Afterwards came passages more particularly addressed to the House of Commons—paragraphs respecting the estimates, the flourishing state of manufactures, and the burthens of the people; after which followed a statement of the satisfactory issue of the conflict with the United States, and the successes that had attended the war in Ceylon, and on the continent of India. A few words, attributing these results to Divine Providence, concluded with the following sentence:

"It will be the Prince Regent's constant endeavour to maintain, by the justice and moderation of his conduct, the high character which this country has acquired among the nations of the world; and his Royal Highness has directed us to express his sincere and earnest hope, that the same union amongst ourselves which has enabled us to surmount so many dangers, and has brought this eventful struggle to so auspicious an issue, may now animate us in peace, and induce us cordially to co-operate in all those measures which may best manifest our gratitude for the Divine protection, and most effectually promote the prosperity of our country."

The Address was moved by the Marquis of Huntly, and seconded by Lord Calthorpe, after which Lord Grenville rose to express his entire concurrence in it, and trusted it would receive the unanimous approbation of the House. He rejoiced that the new war, in which we had been unwillingly involved, had terminated in a success unexampled in the annals of the world; and that peace had been restored in a way the most likely to ensure its continuance. The Marquis of Lansdowne and Lord Grosvenor were equally cordial in their approval; even Lord Holland expressed a qualified approbation; and the Address was agreed to, as Lord Grenville had desired.

In the Lower House, there was not quite the same unanimity, though the Address was received with favour by many of the Opposition. Lord Castlereagh made a very effective speech, in reply to an attack by Mr. Brougham on the King of Spain. The Opposition could only muster a minority of 23 to support an amendment. After the division, Lord Nugent gave notice that he should move a resolution of the House relative to keeping a standing army in France, and respecting the prorogation of Parliament for an unusual period, during the negociations for a Treaty of Peace.

In the debate of the 12th of February, when the Chancellor of the Exchequer opened the policy of Government, and went into the estimates, Lord Nugent protested against a Peace Establishment of 150,000 men, and did not see how Parliament could have any control over the British army in France. The subject was brought before the House of Lords by Lord Grenville, on the 14th, when he moved an Address for the production of the Military Estimates for the year, which was carried. On the 19th, he made a longer speech on the position of France, after Lord Liverpool had moved an Address to the Prince Regent, in approval of the Treaties, and proposed an amendment. The Marquis of Buckingham spoke to the same effect, approving the restoration of the Bourbons, but disapproving a large military establishment in time of peace. The amendment was negatived by a large majority. The same day, and the day following, a similar discussion took place in the House of Commons, Lord Milton moving an amendment, which was supported by Lord Nugent, Sir James Mackintosh, Mr. Tierney, Sir Samuel Romilly, Mr. Francis Horner, and Mr. Ponsonby, but was negatived by a majority of more than three to one.

On the 20th of March, during a discussion, in the House of Commons, on the salaries of certain public officers, Mr. Brougham ventured to make a severe attack upon the Prince Regent—more to the annoyance of his friends than of his opponents. The debate concluded with a majority of 29 in favour of Ministers.

On the 2nd of April, the Marquis of Buckingham, in a striking and argumentative speech, brought forward a motion, in the House of Lords, on the state of Ireland. After pointing out the evils under which that country was labouring, he, in the language of the Parliamentary Report, "concluded an impressive peroration by moving for the appointment of a Committee to inquire into the state of Ireland." Lord Grenville took part in the discussion that ensued; but the motion was lost by a majority of 70.

Several appointments and promotions appeared in the Gazette about this period, the most important being that of the Right Hon. George Canning (June 4) as President of the Board of Control.

About the middle of the month of May, the attention of Parliament was directed to the obstruction created in the thoroughfares of the Metropolis, by calling out the military to assist in civic processions, and on similar occasions. Lord Milton having been stopped, while proceeding to the House of Peers, by soldiers in Pall Mall, first brought the subject forward, by moving for a copy of the order under which the military had acted. Although this was supported by the Duke of Sussex, the Marquis of Buckingham, Earl Fitzwilliam, Lord Holland, and Earl Stanhope, it was opposed by the Government, and negatived by a majority. This, however, did not prevent the Marquis of Buckingham from bringing forward another motion on the subject, two days later (17th), when, in a forcible speech, he dilated on the evils of allowing a military force to perform the duties of the constabulary, and concluded by moving an Address for copies of the Orders; but, on Viscount Sidmouth stating that he had the commands of the Prince for assuring the House that the practice would be discontinued, Lord Buckingham withdrew his motion.

Before the close of the Session, July 2, the Government, for the second time, found themselves in a minority. The result was received with loud cheering, but produced no other effect. The Speaker being summoned before the Throne, made an address of a more prudent character than the one which had formerly brought him into discredit with the Opposition; after which, the Prince Regent delivered a speech, in which thanks and congratulations appeared to have an equal share. The Lord Chancellor then formally prorogued Parliament till the 24th of August.

A suitable partner for the Princess Charlotte had been found in Prince Leopold, the third son of the reigning Prince of Saxe Cobourg. Having been one of the distinguished party who visited England in 1814, he had been admitted into the Royal circle, and had attracted the observation of the Princess. Fortunately, none of the Russian Arch-Duchesses thought a younger son of a minor German house worthy of her attention, and the amiable character, accomplished mind, and fine person of the Prince having outweighed all other considerations with the Princess Charlotte, the Prince Regent, and his Ministers, there was likely to be no obstacle to their union. On the 10th of March, a Privy Council had assembled at Brighton, for the purpose of taking this important subject into consideration, and the Lord Chancellor affixed the Great Seal to the instrument, authorizing their union.

Since the passing of the Royal Marriage Act, a marriage of a Princess of the Blood Royal, was necessarily a slow process, as it must go through the following stages.

I. Letter from the intended bridegroom, soliciting the Sovereign's consent.

II. The answer of approval thereto, from the Sovereign.

III. Draft of Commission, authorizing the persons therein named, to treat of and concerning the marriage contract or settlements.

IV. Order in Council, approving of the said Draft, and giving directions to his Majesty's Secretaries of State, to prepare the same for passing the Great Seal.

V. Warrant for affixing the Great Seal to the Commission.

VI. Instrument of Royal consent to the marriage.

VII. Warrant for affixing the Great Seal thereto.

VIII. Declaration in Council of the Royal Consent.

IX. Order in Council to enter the same in the Books of the Privy Council.*

Notwithstanding some disadvantages, the Princess had grown up to womanhood, with many attractions, both mental and personal. Her Royal Highness possessed, also, a nature susceptible of every

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[1] "Life of Lord Chancellor Eldon," Vol. I., p. 545.

generous impression; unsuspicious and trusting, she readily became the dupe of persons who sought, for their own objects, to influence her through her sympathies; but when the influence was removed, the natural good sense of the Princess suggested a line of conduct becoming her sex and position. During the period when the society of her mother was least restricted, there is nothing to prove that her Royal Highness testified for it a very decided partiality; and it was scarcely possible for her to have been a frequent visitor at Blackheath and Kensington, without obtaining a knowledge that must have circumscribed her affection. Her disposition was extremely amiable, notwithstanding an impulsiveness, that under peculiar provocation, may have led her, on one or two occasions, into error; a pleasing proof of which was exhibited in her conduct to Lord Eldon, after he had brought her home, subsequently to her elopement from Warwick House.[1] In her communications with, or observations on her mother, after the latter had left England, there are quite sufficient evidences of filial interest, tempered with a reserve, naturally arising out of a sense of her objectionable conduct.

As for the Princess of Wales, she was as deficient in parental, as in feminine feeling. As long as her daughter could be made an instrument for advancing her own objects, her Royal Highness professed a superabundance of maternal solicitude; but all this evaporated as the shores of England faded from her sight. Her interest became concentrated upon her adopted children, till they were superseded by low favourites, for whom she sacrificed what little reputation survived, and the respect of all her English friends. These connections, at last, became so glaringly degrading, that every one of her English attendants quitted her service.

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[1] "Life of Lord Eldon," Vol. I., p. 555.

A message from the Prince Regent had been presented to the House of Lords, by Lord Liverpool, and to the House of Commons, by Lord Castlereagh, on the 14th of March, respecting the proposed union of the Princess Charlotte and Prince Leopold, and on the following day, the Chancellor of the Exchequer proposed an allowance of £60,000, £15,000 of which would form the privy purse of Her Royal Highness, £50,000 a year to be settled on the Prince, in case of her death, and £50,000 for an outfit. A clause was introduced into the marriage settlement, to prevent the Princess being taken out of the country without her consent, and that of the Prince Regent. The grants were agreed to.

The marriage ceremony was performed by the Archbishop of Canterbury, on the 2nd of May, in the Great Crimson Room at Carlton House, in the presence of all the Royal Family, the Ministers, Officers of the Household, and many distinguished guests. The company afterwards passed into the great Council-Chamber, where a numerous assemblage of English and foreign nobility remained in waiting to pay their compliments to the illustrious pair. The Prince and Princess shortly afterwards left, to spend their honeymoon at Oatlands. On the 4th of May, his Royal Highness was gazetted a

General in the army, and on the 25th, a Field-Marshal. Other promotions followed. The Bill for settling the revenue of the Princess passed the House of Commons on the 9th of April, and received the Royal Assent by Commission on the 11th.

The Commissioners of Woods and Forests purchased Claremont, for £69,000, of Charles Rose Ellis, Esq.; and there the truly happy pair soon afterwards removed, and gained the love and admiration of all who came within their influence. There is no truth in the charge brought forward in a modern publication, that they lived in a state of such thorough espionage, by command of the Prince Regent, that the Princess was not permitted to see alone any of the friends of her youth;[1] there is every reason to believe that her Royal Highness enjoyed perfectly free intercourse with every one worthy of her society. The few letters extant, under her own hand, show that the Princess had no cause of complaint on this, or on any other point of importance; moreover, they prove the genuineness of her affection for her husband, and the perfect unanimity of sentiment that existed between them.

The conduct of the Royal Family of France, after their second restoration, was of the same character as that which had excited from Napoleon the charge of having forgotten and remembered nothing on their return from their long exile. In the prosecutions of the distinguished criminals of "The Hundred Days," Louis XVIII. lost an opportunity of inaugurating his reign with an act of clemency that would have gone far towards reconciling him to his dissatisfied subjects; but he clearly made it understood that the Bourbons were insensible to the impulses of magnanimity. Marshal Ney suffered the extreme penalty of his treason. Lavalette, recently the Director-General of the Imperial Post-Office, was waiting the same fate, when the heroism of his wife, and the generous devotion of Sir Robert Wilson, Mr. Bruce, and Mr. Hutchinson, interposed successfully, and he escaped.

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[1] "Diary of George IV."

It is impossible to imagine an act more characteristic of the nation to whom the participators in it belonged, than this singular rescue from death of an active adherent of the long-detested Bonaparte, by three English gentlemen, who happened to be visitors of Paris at the period, and till the appeal was made by the condemned criminal to their humanity, were strangers to his person. Their chivalry on behalf of a national enemy was not recognised by the Frenchman at the head of the State, and a vindictive prosecution was immediately commenced against them, upon an absurd charge of conspiracy to overturn all established governments.

The French Ministers made violent representations to the English Government respecting this transaction, but the letter of Lord Castlereagh to Sir Charles Stuart, dated March 9th, shows that they were not inclined to sanction the extreme measures that had been threatened.[1] The case excited great interest in England, and Lords Grenville and Grey had an interview with Lord

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[1] "Castlereagh Despatches," Vol. XI., p. 179.

Liverpool on the subject. The decision of the Cabinet is fearlessly stated at the concluding lines of the letter of the Secretary of State to the English Ambassador at Paris. "I propose," he writes, "seeing the French Ambassador this forenoon, and shall request him to impress earnestly upon his Government that, whilst the British Government desires to abstain from interference in what the French Government feels due to itself, they claim, on every principle of common interest, that blood shall not be shed in the present case, *however culpable* may have been the conduct of the accused."[1]

They were brought to trial, but nothing could be proved against them, except their aiding and abetting in the escape of M. Lavalette, and this they avowed. Their defence, though it established the serious charge of interfering with the course of justice in a country in which they were but temporary residents, established also the fact that this was done under circumstances that went far to excuse the offence. Sir Robert Wilson said: "The appeal made to our humanity, to our personal character, and to our national generosity—the responsibility thrown upon us of instantly deciding on the life or death of an unfortunate man, and of an unfortunate stranger—this appeal was imperative, and did not permit us to calculate his other claims on our good-will. Perhaps we were imprudent," he adds, "but we would rather incur that reproach, than the one we should have merited, by basely abandoning him, who, full of confidence, threw himself into our arms."

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[1] "Castlereagh Despatches," Vol. xi., p. 180.

Mr. Bruce said, with the same eloquent spirit: "I never was in his house, nor he in mine. I have never had the honour of seeing his wife, nor had I any previous communication with him, direct or indirect, since his arrest. It has been proved that, in no respect was either I, or either of my friends, implicated in his designs. * * * An unhappy man, condemned by the laws, solicited my protection; he proved that he had confidence in my character—he put his life in my hands—he appealed to my humanity; what would have been said of me, if I had gone to denounce him to the police?"[1]

Powerful as were such arguments, they would have been altogether ineffective in the quarter to which they were addressed, had they not been backed by the spirited decision of Lord Castlereagh, as reported to the French Government by Sir John Stuart; and the three offenders were consequently allowed to escape, with the slight punishment of three months imprisonment. "I rather wish I had heard the last day of Wilson's trial," writes Lord Dudley to the Bishop of Llandaff. "Their advocate made what, by the unanimous consent of all the persons present whom I have seen, appears to have been a most splendid, at the same time, a most judicious speech. They had a fair trial; and the sentence was as mild as it could be."[2]

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[1] "Annual Register for 1816," p. 385.

[2] "Letters of the Earl of Dudley," p. 139.

CHAPTER VIII.

[1816.]

DEATH OF SHERIDAN—HIS MEMOIRS BY THOMAS MOORE—CAUSE OF MOORE'S HOSTILITY TO THE GRENVILLES—THE METALLIC AND PAPER CURRENCY—THE PROPERTY TAX—LORD CASTLEREAGH'S DEFENCE OF THE SINKING FUND — IMPOLICY OF HASTY REDUCTIONS — FALSE ECONOMY — VISIT OF THE GRAND DUKE NICHOLAS OF RUSSIA — RIOTS.

CHAPTER VIII.

IN the summer of this year, died Richard Brinsley Sheridan. Politically he had been dead some years before; for since he had failed to get again returned for Parliament, in the election of 1812, he had led a kind of life, which lost him the countenance of some of his important friends. When stricken with a mortal disease, a sheriff's officer arrested him in his bed, and would have carried him off in the blankets, had not the physician interfered.[1] He was permitted to linger undisturbed till the 7th of July, when he breathed his last. On the following Saturday, his remains were honoured with a public funeral in Westminster Abbey, attended by two Royal Dukes, a throng of the most distinguished members of the peerage, and many other persons of station and celebrity. The poet of his party thus bitterly characterized this incident:

> "Oh, it sickens the heart to see bosoms so hollow,
> And friendships so false in the great and high-born,
> To think what a long line of titles may follow
> The relics of him who died friendless and lorn.

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[1] Moore's "Life of Sheridan," Vol. II., p. 458.

> How proud they can press to the funeral array
>   Of him whom they shunned, in his sickness and sorrow—
> How bailiffs may seize his last blanket to-day,
>   Whose pall shall be held up by nobles to-morrow."

This contrast, though striking, readily admits of explanation. They shunned the man, rather than the genius; they offered their homage to the genius, when the faults of the man were disconnected from it. Such a termination of such a career "points" a most effective moral, which must suggest itself to every one. It need only be added here that posterity has already endorsed the verdict of his contemporaries. The adventurous politician is totally neglected—the creator of our genteel comedy continues to draw more brilliant audiences than that which obtained for his remains the distinction of a resting-place in Poet's Corner.

His gifted countryman, who then wrote so movingly on the fate of

"The pride of the palace, the bower, and the hall,"

Th Moore

lost little time in endeavouring to collect materials for his biography. In his recently published Diary, there occur some curious revelations respecting his progress with his task; and some of the entries may enlighten the reader as to the cause of certain slights of the Grenville family, to be found in his writings; particularly the studied manner in which Lord Grey is praised, and Lord Grenville ignored. The following extracts from the Diary are extremely characteristic.

On the 19th of September, he writes: "Mr. Grenville, to my regret, was gone. I wanted to uncork (to use an old joke) whatever remains of *Old Sherry* he might have in him. Lady Lansdowne said he had mentioned the subject to her—that he *has* letters of Sheridan's, but that he will *not* give them." The Diarist adds, in the spirit which made the soldier in Gil Blas back his appeal for charity with the barrel of a loaded musket, " I shall try what effect the knowledge of my having so many letters of his *own* may produce on him. He is said to be very fidgetty about his epistolary fame; and, if so, the intelligence may at least give him a sleepless night or two, which he deserves for such sulky uncommunicativeness."[1]

The threat, however, had no effect. Mr. Grenville possessed too much spirit to allow himself to be bullied out of his property. So on the 12th of the following month, the Diarist makes the following entry: " Looked over Mr. T. Grenville's letters. By the bye, when I told Lady Holland that he said that he *would not* give me the letters of Sheridan he has in his possession, she answered: 'Well, I hope you mean to punish him with a sentence or two;' and I am strongly tempted to do so."[2] This was very amiable of Lady Holland, and shows how easily her favourite could be induced to be spiteful. On the next day he writes: "Received a letter from Mr. T. Grenville, very wordy, and labouring hard at an excuse for not giving me the letters. Says they '*only* refer to the lady whom he first married.'

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[1] "Memoirs," Vol. II., p. 166.

[2] Ibid, p. 189.

Only! The very thing I want. Have replied to him, and tried by little gentle hints to *shame* him into letting me have them; but it is, I fear, hopeless."[1] Most assuredly it was. Mr. Moore had mistaken his man. He had led too honourable a life to be so easily shamed, and, having a conscience perfectly at ease, slept soundly, threats of exposure notwithstanding.

Judicious friends prevented the revenge that had been so kindly prompted; for, on the 20th, there is an entry, "Rogers thinks I must not give extracts from Mr. T. Grenville's letters, he being still alive; and Lord L. [Lansdowne] he says, thinks the same; so I suppose I must give them up; though there would be a very amusing revenge in quoting *his solemn nonentities*."[2] This parting bit of spite is extremely amusing. The publication of Mr. T. Grenville's correspondence[3] has given the reader a better opportunity of judging of his epistolary talent, than he could have obtained from a few garbled extracts, however carefully turned into ridicule. But the offended Wit was not to be baulked of his revenge; hence, the unfair manner in which the Grenvilles are treated in his writings, whenever he has been obliged to mention them.

Among the causes of the commercial embarrassments this year, was the simultaneous contraction of the metallic and paper currency. The former was, firstly, caused by a large falling off in the supply of bullion from South America. In the year 1805, the gold and silver coin from this source amounted to £7,104,436, in the present year this had diminished to £2,528,008; and this large decrease was the more felt, in consequence of a great proportion of the stock of previous years having been drawn from the country by war expenses, subsidies, and loans. Secondly, by a sudden withdrawal from circulation, of Bank notes, and as rapid a depreciation of bills of exchange. Two years before, the provincial banks enjoyed a buoyant circulation of notes to the amount of £22,700,000: it was now reduced to £15,096,000. The commercial paper, offered for discount at the Bank of England, which, six years since, averaged £20,070,000, had sunk to £11,416,400, and, by the following year, to £3,960,600. These results were attributed at the time to different causes, in which the approaching discontinuance of the restriction on cash payments by the Bank of England, figured prominently; but in monetary affairs, action and re-action follow each other as naturally as the ebb and flow of the tides; and the expanse in the circulation produced during an active war, necessarily contracted on the return of an unexciting interval of peace.

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[1] "Memoirs," Vol. II., p. 189.

[2] Ibid, p. 196.

[3] See "Courts and Cabinets of George III.," and the present Work.

Opinions are divided as to the value of the proceedings of Parliament, at this period, with reference to this subject; but, happily, we have been placed in a position, through the prodigious, apparently inexhaustible supply of gold from Australia and California, and the corresponding dilation of commercial confidence on both sides the Atlantic, to feel very slight interest in the apprehensions of alarmists of forty years back. With an inadequate metallic currency, restriction on paying in coin appears to some writers unavoidable; and they aver that legislative interference for a time increased the evil it was intended to remedy, by causing that feeling of distrust which so violently affected the currency in paper. This distrust, however, diminished as the coin began to return from the continent—chiefly in exchange for manufactured goods—which shortly had so beneficial an effect, that the price of gold which, in 1814, was £5 8*s*. the ounce, fell before the end of the year (1816) to £3 19*s*.

Gold was far from being the only commodity that diminished in price—wheat fell in this same period from 110*s*. to 85*s*. a quarter; these variations caused as much embarrassment and distress in some quarters, as comfort and enjoyment in others. They had a serious effect upon income, and great disinclination began to be exhibited to the payment of the Property-tax—two shillings in the pound on all incomes of £50 and upwards—the continuance of which was strongly opposed in Parliament, partly from being considered a war-tax, that ought to have ceased with the war, and partly from the diminished incomes, and depreciated property of a vast number of persons from whom it was exacted. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, however, proclaimed a deficit of ten millions, and the Government preferred a continuance of this impost for two years, to the contraction of another loan. After an average expenditure of £52,000,000 a year, and liabilities for the current year, amounting to £80,185, 828, the Exchequer was far from being in so flourishing a condition as to be able to dispense with so considerable a source of revenue (£12,039,120, in 1815); but the Opposition were for immediate retrenchment, and a large diminution of the public burthens—some even suggesting an application of the Sinking Fund to the current expenses—and their ideas were so popular, that the abolition of the tax was carried in the House of Commons, by a majority of 238 to 201.

The small incomes that had paid property-tax—and in this category, was included the most respectable portion of the industrious population, thus got rid of an exaction, that had long been unpopular; but the Government finding that it must again become a borrower, increased the general satisfaction, by unexpectedly remitting the war duty on malt, producing £2,700,000 a year, and then by another loan added to the National Debt, £8,939,802. Sir Archibald Alison in his account of these transactions, confers a well-merited encomium on Lord Castlereagh, for the manly stand he made for the conservation of the Sinking Fund; but finds fault with the ground on which it was made—the preservation of a direct tax.[1] Whether this able Minister committed an error by striving to retain a certain resource for a short time, rests upon another decision, as to whether it is more equitable to continue, for a brief interval, such payments, than to evade them altogether by throwing the liability on posterity. As long as the tax-payer is forced to contribute to the Exchequer a certain sum yearly, it must be a matter of very little difference to him, whether it be by direct or indirect taxation, and it has been pronounced a most short-sighted policy, without reference to its honesty, for one generation to untax themselves at the expense of their successors. The economy of the proceeding has also been called in question, some writers argüing that thus suddenly drying up a safe source of revenue, is pretty sure, sooner or later, to call for the opening of some other channels to produce longer and heavier contributions. It has been stated that the continuance of the tax for two years, would have insured its total abolition, not only without causing any addition to the standing debt, but that it might have placed the Chancellor of the Exchequer in a position to dispense with other imposts that pressed heavily upon the industry of the nation.

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[1] Alison's "History of Europe from the Fall of Napoleon," Vol. I., p. 105.

The arguments put forward by some of the leaders of Opposition for the reduction of expenditure, disclosed the same impatience and short-sightedness. They were too hasty in reducing our warlike establishments. A nation that had achieved greatness by force of arms, should always be in a position to maintain it. Surrounded by first rate military powers, by whom a combination against the interests of the Empire, or the liberties of Europe, was at all times possible, England should have preserved her warlike resources so as at the least expense and loss of time, to have had them ready either for offence or defence. Unfortunately a false economy gained ground, and the Army and Navy were reduced from time to time, till there was not sufficient of the former for garrison duty, and what was left of the latter, was inadequate either for protection or menace. In after years, while these economists were still clamouring for a reduction, almost amounting to disarmament, the Government was obliged to remain passive, when acts were perpetrated in Europe, which loudly called for interference; and recently when against the inclination of our Ministers, the nation drifted into a war, our total want of preparation, of military talent, of experienced soldiers, and proper warlike materials, created an expense a hundred fold greater than it would have been, had our military and naval establishments been maintained on an efficient footing.

The speeches of Lord Liverpool in the House of Peers, and of Lords Castlereagh and Palmerston, in the House of Commons, during the debates that followed motions for a reduction of the expenditure, ought to have satisfied their hearers of the criminal folly of disarming a powerful nation, after a conflict so prodigious and general as the one just terminated; but the Opposition appeared beyond the reach of argument; and under their auspices, began those attacks on the strength and grandeur of the British empire, which subsequently made her appear so easily accessible to a bribe, when Russia contemplated the conquest of an enfeebled neighbour, preliminary to establishing a despotism over Europe more complete than that which had excited this conflict.

Unquestionably, it is the duty of a Minister, to avail himself of the very first opportunity to diminish the burdens of the people, after a protracted struggle that had caused them many sacrifices, and much suffering; but it is rarely that the expenses of a great war terminate with the hostilities; and Lord Castlereagh, in seeking a short prolongation of a tax passed to meet a war expenditure, was not only not breaking faith with the nation, but had evidently taken a statesmanlike view of the national finances, and was making arrangements for a sensible reduction of taxation at an early period. This was prevented by the clamour of the economists, who not only prepared a heavy addition to the load of debt that already oppressed the nation; but by causing the discharge from our naval and military armaments, of no less than 200,000 combatants, so glutted the labour market, that almost every department of industry suffered prodigiously more than it could have endured from the property or any other tax that affected them.

In any diminution of the warlike resources of the nation, which peace might reasonably demand, it is the bounden duty of the Legislature to secure our naval and military establishments in an effective state, readily available for offensive or defensive purposes, when required. It is impossible too strongly to condemn the ordinary mode of reduction, which at once wastes a large surplus of skilled combatants, impossible to recreate in an emergency, and impoverishes the industrious population in a manner that admits of no immediate remedy. Parliament reduced and lavished by successive fits. It called for monuments to Wellington and Nelson, at the expense of half a million, and gave no orders for either. Other heroes were more fortunate, and their monuments adorn St. Paul's, and Westminster Abbey. £800,000 were voted to the brave men of the Peninsular army, for the warlike stores they had taken from the enemy; and £200,000 to their skilful Commander; both grants were unexceptionable. £35,000 were voted for the purchase of the invaluable examples of Greek sculpture, Lord Elgin had procured from some of the finest monuments of Greece. The grants in the spring, for the Princess Charlotte and Prince Leopold, were equally liberal; indeed, it is difficult to reconcile the enlightened generosity that distinguished these votes, with the short-sighted parsimony that marked the reductions.

Government increased the reputation it had gained by the glorious termination of the once apparently hopeless struggle with Napoleon, by a success equally honourable that attended an expedition under Lord Exmouth, sent against the Dey of Algiers. Other advantages were achieved by our army in India. These afforded additional evidence, that the Cabinet possessed that essential requisite for effective deliberations, "a head."

Towards the end of the year, this country received a distinguished visitor, in the person of the Archduke Nicholas, brother of the Emperor Alexander, of Russia. Evidence is not wanting, that the Czar had objects in view at this period, besides marrying his sisters—

objects so important, that their success demanded a knowledge of the obstacles likely to be found in their way, from a source the most trustworthy. It is singular, that the individual selected for this post of observation, should, after cautiously waiting an opportunity for realizing a long cherished scheme, nearly forty years later, have ventured upon its development—with what success, is well known. But, artfully as these great designs were disguised, they were penetrated. One of our popular journalists thus writes: "Let Europe beware of the future irruptions of the northern hordes. Russia is now the giant to be watched; and she will be watched."[1] She was watched; and there is every reason to believe that the attitude of attention which the English Government assumed, necessitated the Czar to postpone his project. The Grand Duke remained two or three months in this country; and at his own particular request, witnessed a prize-fight, surrounded by his suite.

The close of the year was disturbed by riots in the metropolis. Much distress existed among the labouring poor, which, as usual, was taken advantage of by demagogues to collect mobs, and inflame the passions of the ignorant, who composed them. There was a tumultuous meeting at Spa Fields, with flags and banners, which was followed by attacks upon the shops of the gun-smiths, to obtain arms and ammunition, and riotous assemblages in several districts, attended with much destruction of property. The Prince Regent, and the Government, endeavoured to lessen the prevailing distress by subscriptions, to which his Royal Highness added £7,000, and a committee was appointed to distribute relief.

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[1] Felix Farley's "Bristol Journal," Retrospect for 1816.

CHAPTER IX.

[1817.]

OUTRAGE ON THE PRINCE REGENT—THE ROYAL SPEECH ON OPENING PARLIAMENT—REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE OF SECRESY—MEASURES TAKEN TO SUPPRESS SEDITION—INCREASE OF REVOLUTIONARY COMBINATIONS—MR. BROUGHAM'S ATTACK ON THE GOVERNMENT—ANSWERED BY LORD CASTLEREAGH AND MR. CANNING—DEATHS OF MR. FRANCIS HORNER, HON. GEORGE PONSONBY, AND JOHN PHILPOT CURRAN—ELECTION OF A NEW SPEAKER—EMPLOYMENT OF SPIES—DEATH OF THE PRINCESS CHARLOTTE IN CHILDBIRTH—INDIFFERENCE OF THE PRINCESS OF WALES—GOVERNMENT PROSECUTIONS.

CHAPTER IX.

THIS year commenced under unfavourable auspices. Notwithstanding the efforts that had been made to lessen the amount of suffering among the labouring classes, there existed a great deal of discontent, which only awaited an opportunity for bursting into open violence. A formidable portion of the population had imbibed doctrines that made them regard their rulers as the source of all the evils attendant on their position; and, so violent a tone did they assume, that a most jealous watch on their movements was necessary, to guard against mischief. A disturbance, however, they were determined to make, and an occasion for it was presented, when the Prince Regent was returning from the House of Lords, where he had been to open Parliament, on the 28th of January.

The Royal Speech on that day, after referring to the hopeless condition of the King, and the assurances of amity from foreign powers, dwelt in a tone of congratulation and pride on Lord Exmouth's attack upon Algiers; it then glanced to the military operations in Nepaul, and their successful termination. The estimates came next into consideration, and a deficiency in the revenue of the preceding year was announced. A notice of the completion of the new silver coinage preceded the concluding paragraph, which was devoted to the distresses of the country, and contained an assurance that the sources of national prosperity were unimpaired, and that, therefore, there were grounds for a confident hope, that the country would easily surmount its temporary difficulties. It concluded with the following sentences: "In considering our present situation, you will, I doubt not, feel a just indignation at the attempts which have been made, to take advantage of the distresses of the country, for the purpose of exciting a spirit of sedition and violence. I am too well convinced of the loyalty, and good sense of the great body of his Majesty's subjects, to believe them capable of being perverted by the arts which are employed to seduce them; but I am determined to omit no precaution for preserving the public peace, and for counteracting the designs of the disaffected; but I rely, with the utmost confidence, on your cordial support and co-operation in upholding a system of Law and Government, from which we have derived inestimable advantages, which have enabled us to conclude, with unexampled glory, a contest, wherein depended the best interests of mankind, and which has been hitherto felt by ourselves, as it is acknowledged by other nations, to be the most perfect that has ever fallen to the lot of any people."

The particulars of the outrage on his Royal Highness, were communicated to both Houses of Parliament, by Lord James Murray, the Lord in Waiting, from which it appeared, that the Prince's escort, the Life Guards, were grossly insulted, and the State carriage pelted with missiles, that broke the plate-glass. Lord James Murray was also of opinion, that bullets, from an air-gun, had been discharged at the Prince. The indignation was general, and an address was unanimously agreed to by both branches of the Legislature, expressive of their sense of this "daring and flagitious attack," and of their hope, that immediate measures would be taken "to discover, and bring to justice, the aiders and abettors of this atrocious proceeding." The Prince returned a most gracious answer, expressive of his satisfaction at receiving this additional proof of their duty and loyalty, and stating, that orders had been sent to bring the offenders before the proper tribunal.

Addresses were soon afterwards presented to the Regent by the Lord Mayor, Aldermen, and Common Council of London, and from the University of Oxford; the latter was read by Lord Grenville, the Chancellor, and, like the former, received a very gracious reply. Other addresses followed.

Political rumours were more current than usual, of coming events that thus cast their shadows before. For instance, Lord Dudley writes to his friend, the Bishop of Llandaff, on the 1st of February: "By the bye, I heard a report last night, which I should not be sorry, and which you would be very glad to hear confirmed— that Lord Grenville, tired of useless efforts to patch up the semblance of an accommodation with a party whose principles differ so widely from his own, has written a letter to Lord Grey, the object of which is to dissolve the connection that has for some years existed between them."[1]

In the House of Commons, some of the leaders of Opposition came forward prominently in favour of retrenchment and reform; and the attention of Parliament was directed to the indications of an unwholesome state of public feeling that had lately been exhibited in various parts of the country. A report of the Committe of Secresy was presented to the House of Commons on the 19th of February; another was presented to the House of Lords some months later, that disclosed the machinations of certain secret associations formed to effect a revolution. Rigorous measures were taken to repress tumult and punish rioters, one of whom—a most hardened ruffian—was hanged; and a Bill passed both Houses to enable his Majesty to secure and detain in custody persons suspected of designs against his Majesty's person and Government. Though opposed in the House of Lords by Lord Grenville and other peers, and by the whole strength of the Opposition in the Commons, a Bill also passed to prevent seditious meetings.

The spirit of revolution seemed to increase, and, early in the same month, a message from the Prince Regent to both Houses again brought the attention of

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[1] "Letters of the Earl of Dudley," p. 159.

Parliament to the continuous combinations that menaced the public tranquillity. The necessity of a further suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act, became so evident, that Lord Grenville advocated it at the second reading of the Bill, when, on a division, there was a majority in its favour of 190 to 50. The Bill passed all the other stages, with large majorities. The Session, one of the most stormy upon record, ended on the 12th of July, with the customary speech from the Prince Regent, preceded by the usual address from the Speaker.[1]

At the last sitting of the House of Commons, Mr. Brougham launched into a severe attack on Ministers; but Lord Castlereagh made an admirable reply, in the course of which, among other ameliorations effected by the Government, he pointed to a rise in the Funds, during the Session, from 62 to 80, a reduction in the expense of the Establishment from £21,000,000 to £18,000,000, and the total abolition of sinecures. In the same debate, Mr. Canning made a very brilliant and most effective speech, in defence of Lord Castlereagh, and the measures of the Administration.

Among the various subjects that agitated Parliament this Session, Catholic Emancipation was again prominent; but though Lord Grenville, with his usual ardour, supported a new motion brought forward by Lord Donoughmore, and his friends were equally eloquent in the other House, large majorities continued to declare that the sense of the nation was against further concession. The revival of the Slave Trade by Spanish, Portuguese, and other nations, also came under discussion, on Lord Grenville (July 10) moving an Address to the Prince Regent on the subject, which was agreed to. Subsequently, treaties were negociated with these governments for abolishing the traffic.

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[1] The Right Hon. Manners Sutton; Mr. Abbott was ennobled with the title of Lord Colchester.

The country, early in the Session, lost the services of one of its most talented legislators, Mr. Francis Horner, who died on the 8th of February, at Pisa, where he had proceeded, with the hope of restoring the health he had sacrificed by the ardour and extent of his studies. Few members on the Opposition benches, were regarded with such genuine admiration and esteem as he excited in the Marquis of Buckingham and Lord Grenville, who subscribed liberally to the monument subsequently raised, in honour of their friend and coadjutor. At a later period, died the nominal leader of Opposition, Right Honourable George Ponsonby; and on October 14th, a far more distinguished orator, John Philpot Curran. He had resigned the Mastership of the Rolls in Ireland, in 1815, and had since enjoyed a pension of £3000 a year.

On the 30th of May, Mr. Dyson, the Deputy Clerk of the House of Commons, received a letter from the Speaker, expressing his intention to resign his office, through inability to perform its duties. The letter was read to the House, after which Lord Castlereagh passed a warm eulogium on the merits of the Speaker, which elicited cordial approval from the members. On the 2nd of June, he delivered a message from the Prince Regent, intimating the desire of his Royal Highness, that the House should elect a new Speaker; when Sir J. Nicholls proposed, and Mr. Littleton seconded Mr. Manners Sutton, the Judge Advocate General. Mr. Dickinson proposed Mr. Charles Williams Wynn, on whose peculiar fitness for the office he expatiated; Sir Mathew White Ridley seconded the motion. Sir C. Burrell, Mr. Sergeant Onslow, and Mr. Wilberforce spoke in favour of Mr. Wynn. Both candidates addressed the House; but Mr. Manners Sutton being supported by the whole strength of the Government, obtained a considerable majority; the votes being, for Sutton, 312, for Wynn, 152. Mr. Sutton was therefore elected. "I consider the effort made yesterday in favour of Charles Wynn," writes Lord Dudley, "as a decisive proof that there is no negociation going on with the Grenvilles. Lord Buckingham indeed is, I believe, heartily sick of Opposition."[1]

Among the subjects that came under the consideration of the Legislature in this Session, was the employment of spies by the Government. Some of the leading members of Opposition were extremely indignant at Ministers obtaining information from such sources, and denounced two persons, Oliver and Reynolds, as being too infamous to be worthy of credit. In times of difficulty and danger, a Minister would be very much to blame, if he declined to receive important intelligence from any quarter; and as for the characters of these particular informers, the statements to their prejudice rested entirely on interested authorities. It appears that the first had voluntarily communicated with Lord Sidmouth, respecting the state of disaffection in the manufacturing districts, and had subsequently been employed to collect information there. The other had performed important services, which had led to the suppression of the Irish Rebellion, and had since been employed by the Government, in various offices of trust abroad. Both were said to be trustworthy and zealous. The clamour raised against them was excited by the revolutionary section of the community, and their abettors, whose designs they had been the principal means of frustrating; and whenever a stirring appeal was attempted from the Opposition benches, the principal feature was sure of being an attack upon the Government, for availing themsleves of the services of such men. It was proved, again and again, that their only offence established an unanswerable claim upon the protection of their employers—and had their conduct been as bad as it was represented, we are not quite certain, that the loyal portion of the community would have held any Minister blameless, who permitted a sanguinary revolution to be developed, while hesitating to avail himself of information proceeding from persons more or less connected with it.

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[1] "Letters to the Bishop of Llandaff," p. 167.

In the month of September, the Prince Regent had an excursion in the Royal George yacht, remaining in the Channel four days, and then disembarked at Brighton, very much delighted with his voyage, the first of a series which his Royal Highness enjoyed with extraordinary gratification.

A town mansion was provided for the Princess Charlotte and Prince Leopold in Marlborough House. It was thought proper that they should reside in London, for, to the intense satisfaction of the loyal of all classes, it became known that their union had been blessed with a promise of offspring. Of all the Royal Family, no one could boast of such numerous and earnest friends as the Princess Charlotte. Since her marriage, her amiable qualities appear to have undergone a full development, and in the quiet enjoyment of her domestic happiness, the minor faults of youth had entirely disappeared. The more reflective portion of the community, when their attention was turned to the Princess, could look to the future with hope, and regard the present without despondency. An heir to the throne of England, the offspring of parents so bountifully gifted, would serve to obliterate all the unpleasant chapters in the recent history of the Royal Family, and would be regarded as an olive-branch, borne above the very stormy waters of the great flood of strife, now happily subsiding. Under these circumstances, and amid these popular impressions, the hour came that was expected to realize the wishes of a nation. The officers of State were summoned to the chamber of the Princess—they came with alacrity, convinced that they should depart bearing good tidings. The sequel shall be given in the words of one of the most deeply interested of these witnesses.

"When she was to be confined," writes Lord Eldon, "I was here at Encombe, but went up to London to be ready to attend her at that period. Poor thing, she was very much charmed with this piece of kindness, as she considered it; and when I went to Claremont, I found she had herself given orders that the best bed in the house was to be prepared for Lord Eldon; and I slept in it, while some of the other Lords had to sleep on the carpet. When her labour was over, I saw the babe, and a noble infant it was—as like the Royal Family as possible. I then went into the room where the surgeons were consulting what bulletin of the Princess they should send, and they had actually drawn one up, stating that she was going on as favourably as possible, when Baillie came in, and after reading it, he refused to sign it, for such was not his opinion. We returned to our houses about two o'clock in the morning, and before six a messenger arrived to let me know the Princess was dead."[1]

Her Royal Highness, after a protracted labour, was delivered of a still-born child at nine o'clock, on the night of the 5th of November, difficult respiration and restlessness came on at half-past twelve, and two hours afterwards she was a corpse.

"She bore her long sufferings admirably," writes Wilberforce, "about ten days before, she had remarked, 'certainly I am the happiest woman in the world, I have not a wish ungratified—surely this is too much to last.' The loss was most deeply felt; their life had been truly exemplary—charitable unostentatious kindness to all the poor around Claremont."[1]

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[1] "Life of Lord Chancellor Eldon," Vol. I., p. 555.

The blow, so perfectly unexpected, fell with stunning effect—husband, parent, attendants, friends, the higher classes, indeed the entire population of the empire, were linked together by a common sorrow. The loss was national, and the whole nation mourned. It is impossible to exaggerate the effect which this most lamentable event created. It appeared for a time to change the aspect of society, and throw an impenetrable cloud over the destiny of the country.

Among the persons whose fortunes were most deeply affected by such a change in the succession to the throne, was the Princess of Wales; but in the eccentric enjoyment of her freedom in Italy, her Royal Highness was at first too much absorbed by her unworthy favourites, to feel the loss of her daughter. Little in this way, was to be expected, for the Princess had afforded abundant evidence that she was not more regardful of maternal, than of marital obligations; but some who fancied they knew her, thought that the forcible severing of the only link that connected her with the throne of England, and promised the means of restoring her to what she considered to be her rightful position, would have penetrated her frivolous nature, and awakened the natural feelings of a woman and a mother. They were disappointed. The Princess received the intelligence with apathy, and continued her pursuits with her wonted indifference to opinion. It is certain that her Royal Highness mentioned her loss, and expressed her sorrow, when writing to the few friends who still interested themselves in her welfare; but her correspondents saw that this was mere conventionality, and treated it accordingly.

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[1] "Life," by his Sons, Vol. IV., p. 362.

There is a letter from the Princess, dated December in the famous Diary, (Vol. III. p. 248), which not only shows how little her feelings had been touched by the death of her daughter, but proves to what extent she could push her natural talent for falsehood. Her Royal Highness there describes two notorious individuals in her suite, whose low origin and vulgar manners were commented on with surprise mingled with shame, over half Europe, as "very agreeable persons," a "very intelligent and gentlemanlike person, of a decayed nobleman's family;" and stigmatises as "jealous English beggars," the respectable portion of her attendants, who, rightly, considered themselves disgraced by such society. She adds in the same reckless spirit: "Since de English neither give me de great honour of being a Princess de Galle, I will be Caroline, a happy merry soul." In a subsequent jumble of bad French and English, she writes, "the old Bégune, Queen Charlotte, is on her last legs, I hear; mais ça ne me fait ni froid ni chaud, now. There was a time when such intelligence would have gladdened me, but now, noting in de world do I care for, save to pass de time as quickly as I can, and death may hurry on as fast as he pleases—*I am ready to die.*"

The Government must have been greatly annoyed by the ill-success attending the various prosecutions they instituted in the course of the year, of grave offenders against the State. On the 6th of June, Wooler was tried for a libel on Ministers; and, though found guilty, in consequence of the Jury not having been unanimous in their verdict, he was acquitted. On the 9th, Watson, Thistlewood, Preston, and Hooper, stood a seven days' trial on a charge of High Treason; and a verdict of not guilty being returned against the first, the prosecution against the rest was abandoned. On the 2nd of August, Roger O'Connor was acquitted at Meath on a charge of conspiracy. On the 18th of November, commenced the celebrated series of trials of William Hone for blasphemy and libel; and he also escaped. The labours of the special commission at Derby were more productive; for they contrived to convict four out of forty. A spirit hostile to the Government was evidently abroad, which these failures of justice did not lessen.

The suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act twice in the course of the year, and the imprisonment of some of the most active of the turbulent spirits who were seeking to excite disaffection throughout the country, had a sensible effect upon the working classes. The disturbances, which were at one time truly formidable, gradually lessened in number and intensity; and the well-disposed began to hope that the clamour for Universal Suffrage, Radical Reform, Annual Parliaments, and Vote by Ballot, was about to expire. This, however, was not the case. There was merely a temporary lull in the storm: the gloominess of the atmosphere foretold another tempest.

CHAPTER X.

[1818].

NECESSITY FOR A THIRD PARTY — HONE'S TRIAL—HEALTH OF THE PRINCE REGENT—ROYAL SPEECH ON THE OPENING OF PARLIAMENT—LORD GRENVILLE DESIRES TO RETIRE FROM PUBLIC LIFE—FORMATION OF A THIRD PARTY, WITH THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM AT THE HEAD—MR. CHARLES W. WILLIAMS WYNN—STATE OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS — LORD SIDMOUTH CHALLENGED BY THISTLEWOOD—COURT GOSSIP—THE MILAN COMMISSION.

CHAPTER X.

The state of parties had now become a source, both of interest and speculation. The Tory, or Government party, though relatively the strongest in Parliament, had more than once found itself in a minority, and possibly may have been anxious to obtain recruits wherever they might be found. It possessed the advantage of unanimity, which kept their ranks close, and their front unbroken. The Opposition, or Whig Party, though a formidable minority, both as regards number and daring, was weak from internal division, and want of a common principle of action. The death of Mr. Ponsonby had left it without a recognized leader in the House of Commons, though it possessed several members of decided talent, and considerable parliamentary influence. The shades of opinion amongst them were, however, as various as their characters. Some were too violent, some too moderate. There were Radical Reformers so intensely democratic, that they obtained the designation of "the Mountain." There were liberal Whigs, so extremely cautious, that they might easily have been mistaken for Tories. The violence of the former alarmed, and the backwardness of the latter dissatisfied their friends on the same side of the House. The Government were not unobservant spectators of this difference in their opponents, and were quite willing to take advantage of it, when an opportunity should offer.

At this crisis, some of the more adventurous of the parliamentary friends of the Grenville family, strove to disconnect themselves from the advocates of extreme opinion, and form *a third party*, which might, in time, absorb the independent members, and all others whose politics inclined to moderation. The Marquis of Buckingham had been persuaded to favour this movement; but Lord Grenville was not satisfied with the part he was expected to play in it; and was as little inclined for active opposition, as for active coalition. No man could have had a more thorough knowledge of parties and of politics, or could have taken a more comprehensive view of the state of the country, and of its requirements. He, therefore, could not regard, with such sanguine anticipations, as his nephew's zealous supporters, the organization of this new force; and to prevent being involved in embarrassments likely to arise from his taking a different line from that supported by the entire influence of the head of his family, he expressed an intention of retiring altogether from political discussion. Though this intention he was subsequently induced to modify, he did not enter heartily into the views of the Third Party; hence, the dissatisfaction of those who were most active in it, with the hope of improving their political prospects.

At the opening of the ensuing communication, the writer apparently alludes to the desire of the Prince Regent, to obtain a divorce—a knowledge of some of the proceedings of the Princess of Wales, in Italy, having, as his Royal Highness believed, made such a measure practicable. Subsequently, he refers to the state of the Revenue, from information obtained from no less authentic a source than the Secretary of the Treasury.

LORD GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Dropmore, January 9, 1818.

I hardly know how to credit your intelligence. It seems likely enough that such notions may, in the first moments of this new state of things, have occurred to the Prince, but one sees so many motives and interests to himself and others, against any such step, that I cannot think the proposal has ever been seriously entertained, much less made matter of Cabinet discussion. I heard, indeed, within these two days, upon good authority, I fear too good, that his health is in a very unsatisfactory state, and that considerable, though I suppose, not immediate alarm is entertained on that score.

We hope you have not abandoned your plan of taking us in your way to Aylesbury or Stowe. I think it most likely that we shall not go to town till after our Stowe visit. Charles comes to us about the 19th or 20th. Can you arrange so as to meet him here?

I have the most gratifying accounts of the Revenue for this last quarter. I can show you the details when you come here; but they certainly go even beyond my anticipations, which, in the last spring, Government themselves considered as too sanguine. I trust that the practical result will be to convince them of the possibility, and policy, of temporizing with the finance for a year or two more, and expecting an effective sinking fund (for the present one you know is merely nominal, being supplied by loan) but expecting one that shall be really effective, from the further increase of revenue, the successive diminutions of the interest on the public debts, and the gradual reductions of half-pay, &c., or without having recourse to vigorous measures, as they are called, that is, to schemes of fresh taxation, which the temper of the country is ill suited to, and which I really think its interests do not require.

The opinion of the well-known literary gossip, with which the next letter commences, though somewhat disparaging, is not untrue—but, alas! both Othello and his occupation are gone. The observations on Hone, whose trial for sedition and blasphemy had recently taken place, are equally just. The offence was palpable, but greater offenders had been overlooked.

MR. C. W. WYNN TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Llangedwin, January 7, 1818.

I have not yet, my dear B., seen Dibdin's "Decameron," but from his "Bibliomania," can well conceive it to deserve exactly the character you give. He appears to have more pleasure in dilating on the chairs and sofas, and the cut glass decanters, than on any books; yet he gets together a great deal which is curious and entertaining, and which one knows not where else to find. I trust, without fail, to meet you at Dropmore, on this day fortnight, or perhaps Wednesday.

All rumours of divorce appear to have died away, but this is no proof that the intention may not be entertained. Phillimore tells me, that Sir William Scott took occasion to say to him, that he thought the late calamity had removed the only objection to it. I agree, however, with you, in thinking it most probable that when it comes to the point, neither master nor servants will have the courage to propose it.

Hone's trial, I must own, does not astonish or incense me, as it does Lord Grenville and you. His defence seems so strong a one, that I should have expected a jury to acquit him, even if their feelings had not been roused in his favour, by the violence and partiality of the judges. I regret as much as you can do, the triumph which has thus been afforded to a wholesale dealer in sedition, and the party who support him, but it would be too dangerous a precedent to convict a man for selling what has been repeatedly published at every period, and which has never even been prosecuted. I know not where to find the common law but in practice and precedents, and here they are all against the indictment. It is very well for Lord Ellenborough to say Dr. Boys ought to have been indicted, so ought Ben Jonson, &c., &c., in old times, Reeves, &c., in modern ones; but when these offences, if offences they be, were committed publicly, and in the eye of the officers of the Crown for two hundred years with impunity, it is reasonable to conclude that they were not thought punishable by law.

There are many parts of Junius libellous, besides what was prosecuted at the time; but what should we say now to an information against the publisher of the twentieth edition of what has for forty years been vended in every shop.

I am sorry to see so little progress made in the reduction of our colonial establishments, as I believe that to be the real quarter in which material saving can be made. I have just seen a person lately returned from Canada, who gives me a most formidable account of the superiority of the American navy, on the lakes. Their three decker is much larger than any which has yet been constructed, he says than the 'Santissima Trinidad,' yet perfectly manageable.

Ever, most affectionately, yours,
CH. WILLIAMS WYNN.

The ill-health of the Prince Regent about this time made his attendants uneasy. The death of the Princess Charlotte had produced a serious impression; and the scandals that had reached him respecting the Princess of Wales increased his gloom and irritation. For the first there was no remedy but resignation, and of this his Royal Highness appears to have been sensible. For the other, the only remedy was beset with so many difficulties, that his Ministers shrunk from the responsibility of advising it, though he grew daily more urgent for them to attempt it at any risk.

MR. W. H. FREMANTLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Englefield Green, July 9, 1818.

MY DEAR LORD,

I suspect things are not going on so well at Brighton. You may be assured the *Head* has been, and is still, very bad; and how it will end is yet very doubtful. The turn, I believe, has been of the worst nature, founded on religion and despondency. He certainly don't come to the meeting. The reason given is, that allusion must be made in the Speech, to the death of Princess Charlotte, which he cannot bear; and, therefore, the Speech will be read by commission. It is generally believed that the dissolution of Parliament will be in the spring, and a second Session held afterwards of the new Parliament. I really don't know any particulars of the event first alluded to above; but I am persuaded of the truth of it, from general accounts I have heard. Pray let me know whether you come up for a day or two at the meeting, and what becomes of you, and whether you have had any communication with Lord Grenville. I think I shall ride over to Dropmore before I go to town.

Ever most faithfully yours,
W. H. F.

Parliament was opened by Commission on the 27th, the Royal Speech being read. It referred to his Majesty's continued indisposition, the death of the Princess Charlotte, the assurances of friendship from Foreign Powers, the improvements that had taken place in different branches of domestic industry, and the restoration to internal tranquillity; announced a progressive improvement in the revenue, the conclusion of new treaties with Spain and Portugal for the suppression of the Slave Trade; and ended with a recommendation for an increase in the number of churches. The Address was carried—meeting with no opposition beyond a few comments in both Houses on the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act. It was at this period that the movement for a Third Party manifested itself; and, on the opening of the Session, Lord Grenville wrote to his nephew, entering fully into the subject, and more strongly expressing his intention of retiring from public life.

LORD GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Dropmore, January 27, 1818.

I must frankly own to you that your letter has given me no inconsiderable degree of pain. What Harrison has said to you can be considered in no other light than as a communication made and received by you, and, I grieve to think, *by me* also, *from* the First Minister, *and through* the Secretary of the Treasury, of the intended measures of Government in this Session, with a view to ascertain, and *with the effect* of ascertaining, whether *we*—not you only, but *I* also—are or are not disposed to concur in, or to oppose them. To consider this merely as a mark of private or personal civility from Lord Liverpool *individually* to yourself or to me, is to take a view of such a proceeding so entirely contrary to the usual sense and understanding of such transactions between public men, that I cannot for a moment admit it into my mind.

Now, if I ask myself whether I think your situation such as to make it useful, or in any manner desirable, that you should receive and answer such communications so made, I have no hesitation in answering such a question in the negative, as far as respects yourself only. But on this, after all, there can be no reason why you should not judge and act for yourself; and although I sensibly feel, as I ought, the daily proofs you give me of the value which you attach to my opinions, and of the weight which you give to them in influencing your conduct (much more, I fear, than they deserve), yet I could not be at all surprised, much less mortified, if you should ultimately not see in the precisely same light with myself, the nice limits of the line which you have to pursue, in a situation of as much delicacy as has belonged to any political circumstances in my remembrance.

But with respect to myself, my situation is still more nice and difficult; and I cannot but lament that, before you received and answered such a communication *on my behalf*, it did not strike you as a matter at least doubtful, whether I should be inclined to go so far as either of those steps, the *reception*, and much more the *answer*, must necessarily imply.

Independently of a thousand other reasons, many of them applying exclusively to myself individually, and having no reference, or a reference only *through* me, to any of my friends, even the nearest, and all of which would have compelled me at least to hesitate long before I took such a step, there is one which I must press upon your mind in the plainest and most distinct form. I must the rather do so, because in conversation you always seem to put it by, as if I was using only words of course; and I do really doubt whether you are yourself convinced of the truth, such as it really is.

I am now within a few weeks of completing the six-and-thirtieth year since I first took part in public business, entering deeply into it at a much earlier period than happens to most men, and having more entirely devoted to it the best and most active portion of my life, than happens almost to any. It is on the fullest consideration of all circumstances of duty, power, and situation, that I have taken the irrevocable determination of here closing the scene; not thinking that such a determination imposes upon me the necessity of a total absence from Parliament in all times and circumstances that can arise, much less that it could justify on my part an indifference (if I could possibly feel it) to what is passing there; but, on the other hand, feeling that it implies of necessity a total abstinence from all pretensions to lead, from all duty to follow, from all political intrigue, and all party connection.

To yourself and to Charles, who, in the full vigour of your life, are engaged in the scenes which I am now quitting, in the decline, not to say the close of mine (for its close is in the hands of God only), I need not say what my feelings are, and must be, if on no other account, yet surely, and most powerfully, from the uniform affection of both towards me. It would be strange, therefore, if I withheld from you, from either of you, any opinion on any subject on which you think it can be useful to you. It would be still more strange, if I could feel a moment's pain in seeing that, in any case whatever, you judged it better, on consideration, to take a different course from that which I may have advised. But nothing can be more distinct, nothing more essential to the line which I have deliberately adopted for myself, than the limits which separate this course from that of a man himself still actively engaged in politics, taking for himself such lead or influence in them as from age, experience, or any other cause his friends might be willing to assign to him; and in that character receiving, directly to himself, or indirectly through them, such political communications as other public men may wish to make, on present or future lines of political conduct. What could be more unworthy of a public man, than the affectation of making such a declaration of my retreat from public business, as I made in the last Session; and employing the recess in communication with my former political opponents, as to the course I was to pursue, in support or opposition to them, in the next Session.

If Harrison had proposed to me, that he should make directly to me the same communication which he has made through you, I am sure I should not have hesitated for an instant what answer to return. I should have stopped him *in limine,* when he began to open to me the plan of measures for the Session; and should have told him that, having determined to withdraw myself from public business, and openly announced that determination, it was not a matter for me even to consider how far, under different circumstances in that respect, the present state of party connections, and political opinions, might or might not have inclined me to receive, or justified my receiving such communications from those from whom I had so long, and on so many points, been obliged to differ. That such a communication could not be received, without the fair expectation of some return of confidence or support, and that in the very little of public duty that can remain to be performed by me, I was resolved to keep myself wholly clear of any such engagements, and, therefore, that, with sincere personal regard and friendship to him, and without the remotest idea of personal hostility to Lord Liverpool, (towards whom I never at any time entertained any such feeling), I must wholly decline the communication, and change the subject of conversation to one which it would be more fit for me to entertain.

Need I say, that it was in no degree inconsistent with that line that I should last year even ask from Harrison, as an old friend, some explanations on the public accounts which I received from the Exchequer, and that when, in continuation of what he then wrote, and afterwards stated to me on that subject, he sent me, this year, some further accounts and some explanations, placing them in a still more favourable view than they at first appeared, I should express the pleasure which I truly felt in the increase of the Revenue, and should add the expression, also, of those opinions which I had been all the year stating openly to all who would listen to me, as to the probability that such increase would enable Government or Parliament to provide a sufficient sinking fund without more taxation.

I readily agree that even this, however harmless, and fit to be proclaimed at Charing Cross, is more than I should have said to him, if I had still been engaged in public life, and in a course of politics opposed to the Government; not because the thing itself was unfit, even then, to be said, but because there is in all communication, however innocent, with your opponents on such subjects, an appearance of political coquetry, from which I have through life most carefully abstained, as thinking it unsafe in itself, and derogatory from the manly simplicity of a public character.

I wrote this under the first impressions produced by your letter, and I have no time to weigh my expressions. I am sure I need not say that, if any one of them is such as to give you pain, it is utterly unintentional on my part. I have no wish nearer to my heart, than that I may be able, by such kindness as I can show, to make that return which is due to your affection and kindness, as well as to that which is now no more. But I could not avoid speaking to you with unreserved sincerity on a point in which my own character and good faith to friends who have, I hope, not yet ceased to feel towards me the dispositions of friendship, and to opponents to whom I no longer feel even the smallest remnant of political animosity (for personal, I hope such feelings never were in my mind), a point in which good faith, I say, to both of these, is so evidently and deeply involved. Nor could I avoid stating to you again, and most distinctly, that as a politician, the partizan, the leader, or the follower of any party, I have, and must be considered as having, entirely ceased to act, converse, or communicate.

Ever, with the truest affection,

Yours, &c.,

G.

LORD GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Dropmore, January 28, 1818.

On ruminating on the subject of your last letter, I felt that I could not avoid giving some explanation to H., and through him to Lord Liverpool, of the view I took of the subject, in so far only as respects myself personally. I do not mean to go often into the House of Lords this year, if I can avoid it—the less the better; but I could not go there at all with any comfort, if I thought that an expectation had fairly been created, and not counteracted by me, of my standing towards the Ministers there, in a relation in which I certainly do not mean to stand towards them.

It is right that you should see what I have written—right on every account, and most due to you. I am confident you will see the studious care with which, what I there say, is limited to myself alone, and to my own peculiar situation and course, so as to avoid the possibility of placing you under any unpleasantness or difficulty. The Session seems to have opened pretty much as was to be expected.

I have desired my brother to forward the copy to you, as I have no other. When we meet, I will beg you to return it to me.

The following note further developes his sentiments; and the second, from his brother, displays Lord Buckingham's position and intentions.

LORD GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Dropmore, January 29, 1818.

I just write these lines to say, that you will see, that on reconsideration of your letter, I had remarked the difference you mention in yours (which I have just got), and that I have scrupulously adhered to it, in what I wrote to Harrison.

I have, to-day, a letter from Lord Liverpool, proposing to me to become a member of the new Secret Committee. You will judge, at once, how little such a proposal accords with my view of less active service, and I have, to-day, answered him, all but declining, but reserving my final answer till Sunday, when I expect to hear again from my brother on the subject, and, also, to hear who will, or will not serve. Lord Liverpool talks in his letter, of proposing Lord Lansdowne, but whether that is with his consent or without it, remains to be learnt, and I expect to hear on Sunday.

RIGHT HON. THOMAS GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Cleveland Square, January 18, 1820.

MY DEAR LORD B.,

I have just received from Dropmore a copy of Lord Grenville's letter to Harrison, which he desires me to forward to you, and I have, accordingly, done so in another cover.

I have not yet received from Dropmore, your letter to Lord Grenville, referred to in that which the post has just brought me from Avington; but I will write to my brother for it to-day, and will show it to Charles, agreeably to your desire. If you have determined, for the present, that it will be wiser for you not to attend Parliament, under the present circumstances, I cannot question the prudence of that determination, till I shall have learnt your motives. I see nothing in what has recently passed, that would naturally connect itself with any such determination: at the same time, I must fairly own, that I think it will be more for your advantage and interest to attend rarely in the House of Lords, than to attend oftener in any intimate connection with, or support of the Ministers. If you think that Lord Grenville's more decided secession from Parliament, will make it difficult for you to stand in a separate party, between Government and Opposition, I am not at all sure that it may not be better for you to give a more spare attendance; indeed, I should think anything better for you than a decided and avowed support of Ministers; but at my age, I grow too old for good active counsel, and you, in the prime of your life, can judge better for yourself, than I could hope to do for you.

The next letter, from the Regius Professor of Civil Law to the University of Oxford, who subsequently rose to high eminence in his profession, describes the proceedings of the little party that commenced the movement. It will also be found to contain a tolerably correct picture of the House of Commons at this period.

DR. PHILLIMORE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Whitehall, January 31, 1818.

MY DEAR LORD,

As your Lordship expressed a wish, when I had the pleasure of seeing you on Sunday last, to hear from me in the course of the week, I trouble you with a few lines, though I have little to detail, worthy of communication. The Session has opened heavily, the attendance of members has been but thin, and nothing of any material interest has hitherto occurred. On the day of meeting, Wynn, Stanhope, and myself, very quietly took our seats on the bench we had agreed upon. In the course of the evening, I fell in with Mr. Knox (the member for Tyroneshire) who had been sitting on the Opposition bench; on his questioning me as to our probable leader, &c., I explained to him the course we had determined to adopt; immediately on my resuming my seat, he placed himself next to me, and both on Wednesday and Thursday, he took his post very decidedly among us. Tremayne (member for Cornwall) after questioning me, whether we took our seats where we did, accidentally or designedly, on my explaining the state of things to him, expressed great satisfaction. He is a thoroughly independent person, and wholly unconnected with any party; but I should not be at all surprised if he were to think and act as we do, on most occasions, without decidedly attaching himself to our squad. Sir Thomas Ackland and Cocks, *flirt* with us very much, so indeed does *Mr. Secretary* Canning, but with respect to the last-mentioned, I apprehend it is rather his manner and habit so to do, and I have no doubt but that he already attaches considerable importance to that which he foresees may make a formidable Third Party. Grenfell still adheres to his old seat, but I trust he will soon cross the narrow channel which separates us. I think he will, when he has fairly ascertained that we are as independent of the Government as we are of the old Opposition; this, probably, will be the case with several others, who are anxiously watching our movements as to this point; but, at the same time, it is to be observed, that those of the old Opposition on whom we principally calculated (with the exception of Grenfell and Knox) have not yet made their appearance in the House. The old Opposition seem to be playing our game. They are extremely violent, and apparently without concert. Romilly has hitherto put himself more forward as leader than any other individual.

I trust you will take this *arrant gossip* in good part; you will, perhaps, be able to collect from it an idea of the little demonstration that has been made, as to the proceedings of parties. My own idea is, that, at present, every thing bids fair for the formation of a most powerful Third Party; but we must a little await the course of events. Wynn and myself have been in the House every night, just for the sake of showing that we have not changed our places accidentally. There has been no division, and no fair opportunity of interposing a speech.

Believe me, your faithful and obliged,
JOSEPH PHILLIMORE.

The Marquis of Buckingham endeavoured to dissuade his uncle from carrying out his intention—with what success will presently be seen.

LORD GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Dropmore, February 1, 1818.

I am very sensible to the kindness and affectionate spirit of your letter; nor am I at all surprised to perceive from it, what I had indeed before suspected, that I had failed in conveying to you in conversation as strong an impression as the case required, of my resolution to withdraw myself from the active and forward share in the politics of the day, which I have so long taken. The motives of that resolution it were useless to discuss. You say I am still in health; and God be thanked I am so, though very different even in that respect from what I was, as to the power of undergoing anxiety and fatigue. But you will remember Horace's advice is to unharness the horse when he begins to grow old, and not to wait till he is broken down, and stumbles at every step. As to the consequences of my resolution, I cannot admit that they can be such as you describe. Your situation, talents, and character are such that it would be paying them a poor compliment, indeed, to suppose that their weight in this country was to be found only in the little that I could add to them in the very few years that, even in the most sanguine view of health, strength, and years, can remain to me for the *possibility* of such exertions. An absolute *secession* from Parliament, you know, I have never had in my view. There are few men, indeed, who do not lessen their exertions there as age advances; and if I am obliged now to *say* more than others on the subject of doing that which others *do*, it is only because, up to this period, my exertions have been more undiminished than those of almost any one who has not at my age found himself in actual office, and harnessed therefore to the yoke.

With respect to your own attendance there, it is, I think, wholly a question of degree, extremely difficult to describe in the abstract. I am myself disposed to think, that the present circumstances are not favourable for your taking a constant and daily share in the party skirmishing there. But of that you must judge, in detail, as the cases occur.

I have, much against my will, consented to attend the new Secret Committee. Lord Liverpool urged it as a part, and necessary consequence, of the duty which I undertook last year; and my brother seemed also to think that it might fairly be so considered. I was not convinced; but, in such a question, where one's wishes point so strongly one way, one ought, above all others, to distrust one's own judgment; and I have consequently yielded to the request. Lord Liverpool thinks, or says he thinks, that the investigation will not be long, nor the debates many, that I must, in consequence, attend. But if my decision had rested on those grounds, I should have required better assurance than his for them. Lord Lansdowne writes to me that he means also to attend the Committee. I am sure *he* is right, whether I am so or not.

One of the most talented members of this Third Party, was Mr. Charles W. Williams Wynn, the unsuccessful candidate for the Speaker's chair. He was anxious for distinction; and, as will be shown, far from approving the quiet policy of his uncle.

MR. CHARLES WILLIAMS WYNN TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

February 2, 1818.

MY DEAR B.

Having already expressed to you the regret which I felt at the communication which you received from Harrison; and finding that both my uncles entertained the same opinions, I have purposely abstained from saying anything more to you on a subject which could only be unpleasant to us both, and the further discussion of which could be of no advantage.

I lament that it should have drawn from Lord Grenville, so much more decided an expression of his resolution to withdraw from public business; but with all the respect and affection which I feel for him, I cannot view it as a necessary consequence, that it should so entirely destroy that importance which, after all, must rest on the basis of your own talents, weight and consideration in the country. The object which we had in view, of forming a Third Party, can only be the work of time, and the effect of steering a steady course, without connection or coquetting with either party. Personally, I should not have seen nearly the same objection to the communication received by you, had it been made by Lord Liverpool himself, at any accidental meeting, either in the House of Lords, or elsewhere, instead of proceeding through the channel of the Secretary of the Treasury, at an appointed interview, and producing his written credentials.

Knox is the only person who has expressly declared his adherence to us; but Tremayne has told Phillimore, that he only wondered I had not changed my bench sooner, and has both days, that he has been down, sate with us.

The sudden death of Lord Ossory, by an apoplectic fit which happened last night, will be a considerable shock to my Uncle Tom, who had not heard it when I was with him last night.

The Queen is said to be worse. Meanwhile, we are destined to have enough of the House of Hesse, as, besides, wives for the Dukes of Clarence and Cambridge, it is to supply to Princess Elizabeth, a husband as fat as herself, and forty-nine years old.

Stanhope is confined to his room by an inflammation on the eye, which is not likely to release him for a fortnight.

I am glad that Lord Grenville has consented to attend the Secret Committee, as it seems to be in effect, a combination of the two former inquiries, and, therefore, one which he could not with propriety have refused. How far the result of that inquiry will commit him to the defence of Ministers, must depend upon the nature of the cases which will appear before it.

Ever most affectionately yours,
CH. WILLIAMS WYNN.

Only thirty-two members at four; so no House. Sergeant Onslow told Phillimore, we should have many recruits, as the language of the violent was, that now they had got rid of Ponsonby and of us, they would take their full swing. Brougham, on being asked whether he meant to move an amendment, said, "no, neither he nor his friends; but no one could tell what the *mountain* would do." If this is not 'Biceps Parnassus,' I know not what is.

I really do not think that Lord Grenville's letter to Harrison can, in any sense, be called a disavowal or disclaimer of you, but only a stronger declaration than he has yet made, of his resolution to retire.

On the 2nd of February, Arthur Thistlewood, one of the prisoners lately tried at the King's Bench on a charge of High Treason, and subsequently, still more notorious in the same department of crime, sent a written challenge to Lord Sidmouth. He was soon afterwards apprehended, brought to trial, and sentenced to imprisonment. This is a specimen of the spirit which actuated the political agitators of the time, which not unfrequently led to assassination.

MR. C. W. WILLIAMS WYNN TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

St. James's Square, February 6, 1818.

MY DEAR B.

I have little to write worth informing you of. Castlereagh, after having, on two former days, stated, in answer to Brougham's question, whether he would invest the Committee with the power to send for Persons, Papers, and Records, "that he would not, as it was wholly unprecedented;" yesterday, came down, and said, that he found that power was granted to both the Committees last year, and, therefore, he should move it for this Committee.

The tone of Government is certainly very flat, and they make little exertion to defend themselves. Nothing could be more absurd than their conduct relative to the Recognizances. Upon looking back, I suppose, to the Precedent Book of 1745, they found that the persons of rank and property, then restrained, were enlarged, when the danger abated, upon their own recognizances; and, therefore, bind a man, not worth 3*s*. 6*d*., in a penalty of £100, to appear, which one knows would not bring him in to abide the chance of a whipping. When they were to send the prisoners up to London for examination, in post-chaises, with a keeper armed in each, where could be the utility of fettering the prisoners, except to excite commiseration and irritation? Tierney spoke well last night; Romilly, so so; probably in consequence of his having heard that he was too violent the first night. Why Brougham is so subdued and silent, I cannot imagine, except from affront, at not being placed in the lead.

I am glad to hear that Lord Ossory has left Ampthill, and the Bedfordshire estate (about £6000 a year), to Lord Holland. It is a place he was always very fond of, and he wanted a country-house. The Irish estate, with a large rent charge upon it to Lady Gertrude, who, it is believed, inherits the Barony of Gowran, goes to Lord Ossory's natural son, a boy of twelve years old. The personality is very large, and was intended to be disposed of by a codicil, but none has yet been found.

I congratulate you upon Lady Stanhope's state of affront. I am afraid that it is improbable that James Stanhope, either will be allowed to attend, as he is still suffering most violent pain, and in a constant course of leaches, scarifications, blisters, and physic, which, even when concluded, will leave him in no very frisky condition.

Lord Grenville came up yesterday, to attend the Lords' Committee, which meets to-day. I have not yet heard who are to be the new names on the Committee in our House, but I suppose I shall be amongst them.

Ever most affectionately yours,

C. W. W. W.

MR. C. W. WILLIAMS WYNN TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Saturday, February 7, 1818.

MY DEAR B.

Since I wrote to you yesterday, I find I was mistaken about Lord Ossory's Irish estate, which is left between Lady Anne and Lady Gertrude for their joint lives, but as soon as one of them dies it goes to the natural son, charged with a payment of £2500 a year to the surviving daughter.

This seems odd; for, as the estate is worth £10,000 a year, the survivor will lose half her own moiety by her sister's death. The codicil is found leaving the personalty, which amounts to £100,000, between the two daughters. £5000 to Charles Fox is charged on Ampthill.

I have seen Fremantle this morning, who is just come to town. He tells me that the melancholy of Ministers, which I had before observed, is taken notice of. It is supposed that they have got into some infernal scrape or other, by some of their measures under the Suspension Act; but I do not think this likely, at least, to such an extent as to produce this effect. Besides, Castlereagh has majority enough, as he well knows, to carry him through any difficulty of that kind. It is much more likely that they have got into some demete with the Prince. At all events, their low spirits are too visible to be doubted by friend or foe.

I have called on Stanhope this morning, and was glad to find him much better, easier, and allowed to eat meat and drink some wine.

Ever affectionately yours.
C. W. W. W.

Nothing is yet known about the Lieutenancy of Bedfordshire.

Watkin[1] desires me, if you mean to ask over any boys from Oxford to your dance, to recommend Lords Wilton and Trevor to your selection.

The accounts which reached England of the conduct of the Princess of Wales, were of such a character, that unless perfect impunity were to be allowed, some official notice of it was imperative. It is scarcely possible to state who were most severe upon her proceedings—her friends or her enemies. Indeed, her Royal Highness appeared to be as desirous of placing herself out of the pale of the sympathies of the one, as of defying the indignation and contempt of the other. Her inclination for associates that possessed no recommendation that a sensible or a modest woman could have noticed, had unrestrained indulgence in Italy; and a man who first entered her service in a menial capacity, in a very short time became on a footing so familiar that no disinterested observer could doubt the nature of their intimacy. The attention of the Government was directed towards this scandal. In the Autumn of 1817, a considerable mass of papers, many of which had come through the Foreign Office were, by command of the Prince Regent, submitted to Sir John Leach, in his capacity of first law officer of the Prince, for his opinion respecting the most proper manner of dealing with the allegations against the Princess, they contained. His report was:

"That although the papers contained matters of grave and serious charge against the Princess, yet, considering the great importance of the subject and the nature of the case, it appeared to me expedient that proper researches should be made in the countries where the Princess had resided, and through which she had travelled, for such farther information as might exclude all doubt with respect to the character of her conduct."[1]

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[1] Sir Watkyn Williams Wynn, Bart.

This advice was submitted to the Cabinet; but the "Milan Commission," as the official enquiry is usually styled, appears to have been the joint work of the Vice-Chancellor, who selected the persons to be employed upon it, the Lord Chancellor who contributed his advice and approval, and the First Lord of the Treasury, who furnished the necessary funds. The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs assisted in the matter no further than by permitting letters to be written from his office to place the mission in communication with the authorities of the States to which they were about to proceed.[2] Mr. Cooke, whom the Vice-Chancellor testifies as eminently qualified for the performance of such duties, and as incapable of being the instrument of an unworthy purpose, was placed at the head of the Commission, the members of which assembled at Milan in September of this year, and reported to the Vice-Chancellor the evidence they were able to obtain, which he in due time laid before Lord Liverpool. The report of the

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[1] See the Vice-Chancellor's Letter to Lord Liverpool, preserved in "Life of Lord Chancellor Eldon," Vol. II., p. 29.

[2] No trace of such communications is to be found in the twelve published volumes of the "Castlereagh Correspondence." Many documents, however, appear to have been kept back when Lord Castlereagh's Papers were given up to the representative of his family.

Mission was not delivered till the 10th of the following July, when it was immediately submitted to the Cabinet. In their opinion, it established the imputed adultery; "yet, so long as she continued abroad, and held no higher station than that of Princess of Wales, it was thought expedient to abstain from any public proceeding on the subject."[1]

The Prince Regent's continued demand for a divorce, was with difficulty restrained by the prudence of his Ministers. The latter anticipated the clamour such a measure would produce; and the repeated remonstrances, solicitations, and even menaces of their royal master could not elicit anything more satisfactory than an assurance that, if the Princess returned to England with hostile intentions, they would endeavour to accomplish his wishes.

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[1] Twiss's "Life of Lord Eldon," Vol. II., p. 6.

CHAPTER XI.

[1818.]

POLITICAL RUMOURS—THE PRINCE OF HESSE HOMBURG—SUICIDE OF SIR RICHARD CROFTS—COURT SCANDAL—LORD SIDMOUTH AND THE RADICAL REFORMERS—ATTEMPTED ASSASSINATION OF THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON — PROPOSAL OF THE DUKE OF CLARENCE TO MISS WYKEHAM—STATE OF PARTIES—SKETCHES OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS —THE GREAT NEUTRAL PARTY — ROYAL MARRIAGES — THE PRINCE OF HESSE HOMBURG AT COURT — ATTEMPT TO ASSASSINATE LORD PALMERSTON.

CHAPTER XI.

A MORE extended view of parties in the House of Commons opens in the following gossiping communications. Their descriptions of the Royal bridegroom there given, are more picturesque than refined, but cotemporary accounts are far from favourable to his Highness. The violent death of the physician-accoucheur to the Princess Charlotte, also alluded to, made a profound sensation. He was professionally attending the lady of Dr. Thackeray, and was ushered into the doctor's sitting room, till his services were required. When sent for, he was found lifeless, having shot himself with a loaded pistol he had discovered in the apartment.

MR. W. H. FREMANTLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Stanhope Street, April 4, 1818.

MY DEAR LORD,

I have not written to you till I had been some little time in town, and looked about me, in order that I might be enabled to give you some insight to the carte du pays. Nothing is so decided, thank God! as our separation from the Opposition, and they are, of course, outrageous. Wynn has gallantly taken his stand on Banks's bench, and I have supported him. Our companions are, as yet, few; but I am confident they will increase daily. I know many who are desirous, and only wait for a little more courage, and some specific occasion; this won't be wanting, if I am to judge of the intemperance and anger of the leaders of the Opposition. Brougham, as you see, is quite moderate; what this means, I know not. The friends of Government toady us extremely, and the general opinion is, that we are to have office; but I don't think this will be offered soon, and I hope, for your sake, not; as I am sure the line you are now adopting, of holding off, but giving fair support, the most advantageous to you. I think Lord Grenville's language accords completely with this. I never saw him more indisposed to the conduct of the Opposition. His attending, with great eagerness the Committee, the report upon it must, of course, clinch most decidedly our separation from Opposition. I voted against the Scotch business, because it was really too flagrant, and the Lord Advocate's conduct and defence so infamous. I doubt if any other question will place me with the Opposition. I feel quite delighted to be on another bench.

The town is now full of two events; the Princess Elizabeth's marriage, and Croft's death—the former universally quizzed and condemned. It is impossible to describe the monster of a man—a vulgar looking German Corporal, whose breath and hide is a compound between tobacco and garlick. What can have induced her, nobody can guess; he has about £300 per annum. The Queen is outrageous, but obliged to submit. It will be a dreadful blow to her, and I should not wonder if, after the

Princess is gone abroad, she sinks under it. She is much altered, and I think breaking fast.

Croft's death was a sudden frenzy. He has been confined two or three times in his life; and since the death of Princess Charlotte, he has never been himself. This will bring back all the stories of the Princess Charlotte, which had begun to subside.

It is quite unaccountable, how much the story about the Duke of D. is believed—really, not a house in London, but where I hear it; you know, I suppose, what it is. The present D * * , who is become devote, is said to have confessed the changing the child at the time of the late D * * 's accouchement, and that the present Duke is not the child born; who is, I can't learn—but either Mrs. L., or Captain C. So much for this story, which you may credit, or not. I don't one word, but thousands do. The birth was at Paris, and Crofts, when a young man, went over to attend the Duchess. His destroying himself now, of course, adds to the story and belief.

You will be delighted to hear, my brother[1] succeeds, in October, to the Mediterranean command. I have seen Lord Melville, who has told me so; and, also, to the first class of the Red Ribbon, which I expect will be in the Gazette to-night; these will delight him, as they are both the objects he most coveted.

Berkeley Paget leaves the Treasury, and is appointed Governor of Demerara. Who supplies his place, I know not.

Sir George Hope leaves the Admiralty, from illness; and, I believe, is to be succeeded by Sir George Cockburn.

You know that Lord Anglesea has the Blue Ribbon, much against the inclination of Ministers. Lord Glastonbury told me, but I don't know from what authority he had it, that the Government were disposed to offer it to you, and fought the battle with the Prince.

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[1] Admiral Sir Thomas Fremantle.

I believe I have now told you all that is stirring.

Ever most truly yours,
W. H. F.

MR. C. W. WYNN TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

February, 1818.

I have been very idle, my dear B., in not before thanking you for your elegy, which I have directed to be printed by Bulmer, with a proper border of whiskered death's heads, and patched marrowbones.

I have been recommending to the Welsh grown-up ladies, as the character of Virgins of the Sun is rather stale for their situation, to appear as rival Princesses of Lootchoo, Java, Annamaboo, Pitcairn's Island, and Madagascar, candidates for the honour of perpetuating the line of Brunswick, and promising, that the establishments to be voted by Parliament, shall meet with adequate return.

I have just seen H * * H * * * at the Levee; and an uglier hound, with a snout buried in hair, I never saw.

As yet, our Secret Committee has produced nothing which may not be, and has not been published at Charing Cross, except further details of the proceeding of the small gang in London, who seem, with Lord Grizzle, to think it sufficient for one man to draw his sword, and cry, "S'blood, I'll be a rebel!" in order to overturn the Government.

It is really ridiculous, but if not watched, might certainly lead to considerable individual mischief.

The Doctor's magnanimity with respect to the most active of them, is really on a level with his incorruptible integrity, when tempted by the Plymouth tinman; and he could have no other motive, but that of displaying his courage, and graceful person, to swear the peace; since, by preferring an indictment, he had already taken means full as efficacious to confine the culprit. Canning made a very long speech last night, in part, extremely amusing, but with thorough want of taste and judgment. When a joke succeeded, he harped upon it till he wore it threadbare; and his quotation of Lord Fitzwilliam's letter, was totally unfair, uncalled-for, and unjustifiable. I can hardly conceive anything weaker than the conduct of Government, both in the composition of the Committee, and sending down to them a collection of documents containing all the Duke of Rutland's, and the Duke of Newcastle's Letters and Reports respecting Leicester and Derby, and suppressing those of Lord Fitzwilliam and Lord George Cavendish, respecting the equally disturbed counties of Derby and York; when, by nominating them on the Committee, they were perfectly certain they would be called for.

This is incurring the suspicion of trick and bad faith, gratis.

The Solicitor-General spoke very well last night, and will, I have no doubt, prove an useful acquisition,

I am not aware of any young man for whom I can ask an invitation to Stowe, but my brother-in-law, Thomas Cunliffe, of Christ Church, who is a great dancer, and may, perhaps, get leave, with Lord W * *, &c., to make up a coach-load.

P * * R * * is blacker in the face, and less tallowy, but larger and uglier than last year.

Ever yours,
C. W. W. W.

I cannot understand Brougham; he sits on the back row, behind the Speaker's chair, and only cheers, and never shows a symptom of speaking. I suppose that it is a way of showing resentment, at not being Leader.

We cannot report till the middle of next week; and the Lords will probably be later, as they have adjourned till Monday, on account of Lord Ossory's funeral, which Lord Lansdowne goes down to attend.

On the 11th of February, while the Duke of Wellington was staying in Paris, anxiously occupied in assisting to restore France to her position among the Continental Powers, as he was quitting his carriage to enter his hotel at one in the morning, a pistol was discharged at him from an unseen assassin, who fled on perceiving that he had missed his aim. Two disbanded old soldiers of the Emperor were arrested on suspicion, but as the evidence against them was defective, they were acquitted. The guilt of one, Cantillon, was sufficiently established in the mind of Napoleon, for he subsequently bequeathed him a legacy of 10,000 francs, for attempting this assassination—a most characteristic demonstration of his Corsican disposition.

On the 23rd of February, died one the contributors to this correspondence, the Honourable Sir George Cranfield Berkeley, G.C.B., Admiral of the White, and Lord High Admiral of Portugal. He had entered the navy when only twelve years of age, and had distinguished himself by a long series of services; the most celebrated being his defence of the Marlborough, seventy-four guns, of which he held the command, on "the glorious first of June." He had represented the county of Gloucester from 1781 to 1812, and had always maintained a consistent course in politics. His activity and zeal, when in command of the naval force on the coast of the Peninsula, were warmly acknowledged by Lord Wellington; but his connection with Opposition appears to have created a prejudice against him in the Administration, and he considered himself harshly dealt with when deprived of his command.

The death of the Princess Charlotte had opened a prospect to the throne, to other members of the Royal Family, and the unmarried were looking out for alliances, of which more than one was arranged in the course of the year. That referred to, in the ensuing note, was not likely to be sanctioned, probably amounted to nothing more than partiality. Its fate is recorded in subsequent letters.

MR. W. H. FREMANTLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Stanhope Street, February 24, 1818.

MY DEAR LORD,

There is a grand emotion in the Royal Family, and with some reason. The Duke of Clarence has thought proper to propose to Miss W * * *, who has accepted him.

The Prince, accompanied by the Duchess of Gloucester, went to Windsor, on Tuesday, to inform the Queen of this *happy event*, who was of course outrageous. The Council have sat twice upon the business; and it is determined, as I understand, to oppose it. I have not looked to the act; but as Leach quoted it to me, it states, that a Prince of age, notifying his intended marriage, previous to its taking place, shall be at liberty to marry without the consent of the King, unless the two Houses of Parliament should address the Crown against it. This will, of course, take place; but you may imagine the bustle it creates in the Royal concerns. The Drawing-room on Sunday, was put off; on Monday, it was resumed; and whether it will take place or not, on Thursday, seems yet uncertain; it now stands for it.

My own private belief is, that the Prince has been encouraging the Duke of Clarence to it, at Brighton, and now turns short round upon him, as is usual, finding it so highly objectionable.

I don't know whether you know Miss W * * *; she is a fine vulgar Miss.

I am delighted it is so fine a day for your fête.

You may rely upon the truth of what I have told you.

Ever most truly yours,
W. H. F.

MR. W. H. FREMANTLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Stanhope Street, March 4, 1818.

MY DEAR LORD,

The Duke of Clarence's match is entirely off; they have persuaded him to abandon it. It was with great difficulty. He first proposed to announce it officially to the Privy Council, and sent the notification; but, before it was entered, the Prince sent to him, and, with the Chancellor, urged him strongly to reconsider it. He then desired a day to consider, still determining to proceed in his intention; but, in the meantime, the Chancellor, Duke of York, and others, attacked him: and at last he has entirely given it up. You are quite right with regard to your ideas of its being taken up by the Opposition. I am persuaded it would have been; as they were already beginning to hold strong language on the severity of the Royal Marriage Act, &c., &c. However, this point now vanishes; and the whole force will be applied to opposing the Indemnity Bill. Lambton gave notice yesterday he should oppose it in every stage. It will, probably, be in our house on Friday, and the debate taken on Monday. They will make but a bad division; but, at the same time I am rather disposed to think it will have effect on the country at large, and operate in the general elections.

The petitions which have been presented are complete falsehoods from beginning to end, and will do them more mischief in the House of Commons than benefit. The more I see what passes, and contemplate on the line you have taken, the more satisfied I am that you have judged wisely. Depend upon it, the Opposition are dwindling to nothing, and, from exasperation, will pursue a course of violence obnoxious to the whole country. What further satisfies me as to the judgment in separating now, is the particular violence and anger shown to us by the Lansdowne squad—I mean Abercrombie and Macdonald—and which arises entirely from the conviction that this step, necessarily identifies them more and more with the Opposition. Charles Wynn lost his Bill entirely from party anger. It was our quondam friends, who threw it out; although Romilly, Brougham, &c., voted for it. I think Lord Grenville's public declaration at the present moment, was certainly not kind towards you, nor was it kind towards his family and friends.

I don't think, myself, the Government are in spirits; and I don't know the reason why; for everything seems to go on favourably to their wishes; and, unless unforeseen events occur, there can be no prospect of change or difficulty.

The attack on the Duke of Wellington was a much more extensive plot than was imagined; but they have as yet made nothing of it. The Duke, &c., are very angry with the Paris police, and think they have not been sufficiently active. M. de Cazes, I understand, grounds his difficulty on the great extent of the plot, and the danger of too much disclosure.

If this is so, the case is more alarming than is thought. This is the public belief; and I only know it as such.

I was really sorry not to partake of your festivities, which, I hear from all hands, went off most admirably. I sincerely rejoice that it did so, and that every one was so well pleased.

Ever, my Lord,
Most faithfully yours,
W. H F.

LORD GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Hamilton Place, March 4, 1818.

I have just received your proxy; but I am afraid there is no chance of my being able to make any use of it. I am not only full already, but the Duke of Gloucester has made me write to Wycombe to Lord Carrington, to beg him to vacate his proxy, which I hold, in order that I may give *his*, the said royal Duke's, to-morrow. As to any other peer, I know not one of our immediate friends and connections who is likely to attend, or, at least, to attend *for* the bill; and I do not like to take for you, and without some consideration and talk, the decisive step of entering your proxy on this occasion to a decided Government man; though, if you were yourself on the spot, you might very likely have so done.

Two days quiet at Dropmore completely recovered me from the effects of the revelries in which I partook at Stowe, and prepared me for the dullest six hours I ever passed in the heat and noise of the House of Lords last night, and for a similar dose of, I suppose about twice the quantity, for to-morrow; after which I hope for liberty.

The Prince Regent, Duke of York, Castlereagh and Lord Liverpool, saw the Duke of Clarence together, and fairly talked, scolded, and threatened him out of his love-match.

It is now quite over; and this *embroglio*, at least, will not be added to all the rest.

Whether the love-sick youth is to transfer his flame elsewhere, and where, I know not.

A few more sketches of the House of Commons, and of its celebrities, will not be unwelcome. Ministers were being attacked for their suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act, and for other imaginary delinquencies; but when any hostile motion came to a division, they had always a respectable majority. In the mean time, the Third Party did not make much progress, but its separation from the violent section of Opposition, was not unregarded by the Government, and rumours of office were circulated respecting the seceders, that were no doubt expected to render the division permanent.

MR. CHARLES WILLIAMS WYNN TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Whitehall, March 6, 1818.

MY DEAR BUCKINGHAM,

The fates conspired against my Bill. Its supporters could not be persuaded that it was in any danger, and went to their dinners.

Lord George Cavendish, Macdonald, &c., who voted for it last year, came down to vote against it, upon the professed ground of my change of seat. Brougham, who last year opposed it, now voted for it with Romilly, Curwen, and divers of the Mountain. Vansittart and Bragge Bathurst, the only Cabinet Ministers there, voted for it, but Palmerston, who had expressed himself that evening perfectly satisfied with the clause which I inserted to remove his objection, was also in the majority. So was Croker, who told Moorshead, in the hearing of my informer in answer to a question, "how do Government vote on this Bill?" "Oh, *we* vote against it."

All those who objected against any one particular clause, or part of a clause, joined to throw out the Bill. It will, I believe, be introduced again *piece meal* during the present Session, by those who are most anxious for the different parts of it. Campbell means to bring in that respecting the Land-Tax on the first open day.

The House is very dull, and the debates flat. We have nothing but the hashed-up Habeas Corpus and Indemnity, which really is stewed and devoured to the bare bones.

Denman is, I believe, in general, understood to be very *mountainous* in his politics, and a good deal connected with Romilly and Lord Holland. His abilities are very good, and his speeches at Derby are highly spoken of, but have been rather inordinately flattered by Romilly and others during our debates.

Our Bench does not increase in regular attendants, but has several occasional visitors. Fremantle comes down most days before dinner, but has not, I think, voted this Session, except on the question of the Lord Advocate. I hope we may muster strong on Tuesday, for the question of the Committee on the Salt-Tax.

Ever most affectionately yours,

CH. WILLIAMS WYNN.

P.S. I saw at Murray's, the other day, five volumes of letters of Lord Essex, from 1673 to 1677. They had the arms of Lord Granard on them, but he told me they belonged to Mr. Byng. They ought to belong to your collection, by all the "convenances morales et physiques," as they relate entirely to Ireland, and must, I suppose, have been stolen from Cashiobury at some period.

Do you do anything about Winchester? Temple might certainly walk over for the remainder of this Parliament, and even previous to Meyler's death. Phillimore has been told that, related as he is to Mr. Legge, and some other connections in that neighbourhood, he might be easily put in at a general election, if Sir Henry Mildmay persists in standing.

MR. CHARLES WILLIAMS WYNN TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

March 17, 1818.

MY DEAR BUCKINGHAM,

The disunion and dissatisfaction of the Opposition are, I think, more visible every day, and cannot be better evinced than by their never reaching, on the Indemnity Bill, two-thirds of the number which they divided on the second Habeas Corpus Suspension. Lord G. Cavendish went out of town, after dividing once. Sir O. Moseley and several others staid away. I hear that they complained extremely of the caution of Lord Lansdowne's speech. Abercrombie and Macdonald now stay very much away. Saxton has returned, and will, I believe, take up his seat, *à demeure,* with us. At least, such is the intention he has expressed.

It is very probable that Government will be finally defeated on the Leather-Tax, for I find that they exerted themselves much to collect their 84 last week, bringing down even Ryder, which is always a symptom of their being hard pressed. Many also rode off on their amendment for a Committee, who will not dare, now the Bill is introduced, to vote against it. Phillimore tells me that the obvious object of Wallace, who attends for Government in the Salt-Tax

Committee, is to protract the business till it shall be too late to do anything this Session.

Everybody asks me about my going to Ireland, which I only answer, is the most improbable event I can imagine. Indeed, in any contingency except the concession of the Catholic Question, it would be impossible, and in that, extremely undesirable. People talk much of the Doctor's being ill. Who comes in for Bedwin? Lord Grenville went down to Dropmore to-day, and returns in about a fortnight. Murray has promised me to take the earliest opportunity he can of seeing Mr. Byng.

I want to ask a copy of the Stowe Catalogue for Southey, who is going to review the "Rerum Hiberniæ Scriptores" in the "Quarterly."

Yours affectionately,
Ch. W. W. W.

MR. CHARLES WILLIAMS WYNN TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

March. 1818.

It gives me great pleasure to hear that Lord Temple has succeeded so well at Winchester. Indeed, I had before heard, from more quarters than one, that the Corporation had determined to accede to any nomination of yours, with the view of keeping out Baring. The debate last night was most triumphant for the Bill. Lamb and Canning both made very brilliant speeches; the Solicitor-General not so good as usual. The Cockses appear to have fixed their seat on our bench, and from their conversation with Phillimore, I should think, on principle, and *à demeure;* Frankland Lewis, and Greenfell retain their old seats; but I should think the attacks of Brougham *must* drive the former to us. I tried in vain to speak twice, after Burdett and Brougham, but could not, either time, get the Speaker's eye. I wished to have spoken the first night, but it was quite enough for George to answer Stanhope and Fremantle, without my replying upon him.

I saw Murray the day before yesterday, who told me that Byng (Lord Torrington's brother) left the letters of Lord Essex with him, to see whether he would print them, which he soon found there was no temptation to. That Byng has left them there above a year without any further inquiry. I have, therefore, desired him, when he sees him, to try to enter into treaty and buy them.

This I have done, since I thought that a negotiation through Murray, who can state more strongly how little the books are worth as an article of general sale, is likely to get them cheaper than a direct application to Mr. Byng from you. I looked over some of them, and found the strongest recommendations to his brother, of Sir Arthur Forbes, whom I take to have been his secretary, and to have transmitted the volumes to the present Lord Granard.

Sir William Scott, a few days ago, told a large party of Opposition, that it was quite understood that your friends supported Government, but were not to come into office *just at present*.

MR. CHARLES WILLIAMS WYNN TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Tuesday.

I most entirely concur with you, my dear Buckingham, in the course which you have adopted respecting the Leather-Tax. If is not only a burthensome, but an unproductive imposition, in proportion to its weight. That Government are vexed at their defeat, I can easily conceive; but why should it be expected that we are to help them out of their difficulty? With regard to reduction of our military force, Althorp probably carries his opinions further (as on most other subjects) than, at the present moment especially, a prudent man would wish to accompany him; but still, I am disposed to think that the estimates of the present year, ought to have been diminished, particularly as to the old Colonies, which can have no claim upon us for a more numerous garrison than in 1792. In the present state of the maritime powers, their danger from foreign invasion is really nothing; and whatever is wanted for internal purposes, they ought themselves to supply. There should also be some reduction in the Household troops, as in humble imitation of France they are now called, which are maintained to the utmost of their war establishment, because the Regent thinks a long coat becomes a big belly, better than a dragoon jacket. I therefore shall not regret, if the decision of the House of Commons should oblige Ministers to look about for the means of economizing a little more. To any fair substitute for this and the Salt-tax, I should not object, but I cannot feel that we are in the slighest degree bound, because we oppose one tax as burthensome and impolitic, to take upon ourselves the duty of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and to suggest others. Stanhope, is I hear, much bent upon recommending the revival of the war Malt Duty. Now, without reasoning upon the merits of such a proposition, I am sure none can be more unpopular, or more likely to bring all the country gentlemen on his back. He has not, however, mentioned this to me, but to Phillimore, who tried to dissuade him from it.

What will be the result of yesterday's Westminster meeting, I know not; but I am sure that if the Resolution there voted, that "the rejection of printed Petitions by the House of Commons last year, was an illegal and indecent obstruction, &c. &c.; and all pretences for the outrage, were false, frivolous, absurd and scandalous" should appear, authenticated by Burdett's signature, and if a Petition to the House is presented to the same tune, I shall think that Ministers, themselves, deserve to go to the Tower, if they do not send him there.

I verily believe that no one cause has been more conducive to evil, than the passive submission of the House to every species of indignity in the shape of petition, during the last eight years.

It is said, that Serjeant Copley is about to be brought in by Government, which makes the Opposition very indignant, as his language in conversation has generally been Whiggish. He is expected to be a very useful acquisition, and to have a style of speaking more parliamentary than forensic.

Your account of Lady Buckingham gives me great pleasure. Shall you come up to town next week, or must you previously pay your respects to the Corporation of Winchester?

MR. CHARLES WILLIAMS WYNN TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Saturday.

I fear, my dear Buckingham, that we are not likely exactly to agree about the military establishment requisite for the Colonies, since the arguments on which you justify its present extent, seem to me, to prove only the expediency of a larger naval force. It is by a naval superiority alone, that America can ever seriously attack our West Indian Islands; and, in the meantime, her army is so low, that it would be in our power to send a reinforcement, as soon as they could an attacking force. The increase of the garrison of Gibraltar, at a period when it is comparatively so much more secure, is another of the symptoms which, in my opinion, call for further reduction. But this is a question which we may, for the present, safely adjourn.

On any subject connected with the House of Commons, it is unnecessary for me to say anything here, as the 'Morning Chronicle' will convey to you my epistle, which contains a full and true account of our present situation.

It is, I think, the best squib which has appeared this year; and in most points, it must be owned, correct enough.

Meantime, the reports of our coming in, continue to be circulated; and they add, now, a destination of Fremantle to succeed B. Paget at the Treasury.

Ever affectionately yours,
C. W. W. W.

From the following communications, it would appear as though a vista to office was opening to the "great neutral Party," according to the idea of some of its leaders—their policy, however, was one of expectation, but upon this subject, there were one or two dissentients. The anecdote respecting the German Prince, introduced in the last letter, is probably an exaggeration.

MR. W. H. FREMANTLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Stanhope Street, April 4, 1818.

MY DEAR LORD,

I waited till the House met, to see if I had anything new to inform you of; but there seems to be a perfect apathy on all public matters; there is nothing pending, and not a notice for any great Question. The Government are not in spirits, and I don't know why, for they have carte blanche in everything. I can't help thinking, they are not in unison among themselves.

The Prince is unwell, the gout in his knees; but he sees people in his bed, and gets up about six o'clock. I rather suspect it is more in the mind, the disease, than in the knee.

The public universally believe a proposition will be made to you, and I own I am of the same opinion, but cannot fairly tell you why I think so. I had a good deal of conversation with Wynn, yesterday, whom I really don't understand. He says, he does not expect to have a Cabinet place himself, nor does he feel himself called upon to demand it; but he thinks your party should have a member there. My answer is, if you have one member there, you cannot expect to control, or even to turn the scale; and, therefore, the Chief, being in the Cabinet, is equally a security, as if you had one more; and seeing the present composition of the Cabinet, one member there is as good as more, provided you don't overthrow the whole, and form a new government, which is impracticable. To this, there was no answer, and can be none; for when he talks of his difficulty, from measures he is pledged to, this difficulty must be removed by a previous full explanation, on going into office, which could only be done by you. G

I have also seen and conversed with your uncle Tom, who holds the same sort of language against both Government and Opposition, and fancies you are to make a great Neutral Party; which, by the bye, is rather Wynn's idea, but which, I positively say, will not be the case. Nobody likes a neutrality; and if you get one or more, it will be the most; you may get a few expectants, who would only hamper you. Knowing all your sentiments, I shall not lose sight of your objects, when I see the opportunity present itself for acting upon them.

Lord Essex will give you the books, when he gets them. I am very glad Lady Buckingham is better.

Ever most truly yours,
W. H. F.

Lord G. came to town yesterday, for a fortnight.

MR. CHARLES W. WILLIAMS WYNN TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

April 4, 1818.

MY DEAR B.

Enclosed is my epistle, which I could not procure till to-day; and you must now deal honestly, and return it to me.

I perfectly concur in your opinion of the great advantage of keeping ourselves few as we are, unpledged and unconnected, and at full liberty to avail ourselves of any circumstances which may occur. As things now are, we could not join the Government in such a manner as to be beneficial either to them or to ourselves. If we only wait, we shall, I am convinced, find many of the Opposition who are indisposed to Brougham, Romilly, Burdett, and Lambton, and inclined to join us. It is very much with the view of preventing this, and of giving to our secession the appearance of *ratting*, that all these paragraphs are published, and that the report of our immediate acceptance of office is circulated so industriously.

Lord Grenville is so sanguine about finance, that he seems to think that the progressive increase of the revenue might meet the taking off of the leather-tax, and a gradual reduction of the salt duty without any substitute whatever.

Fremantle appears to me much more impatient for a junction with Administration than I should think desirable, even if they were more disposed than they show themselves, to court it.

Ever affectionately yours,
CH. W. W. W.

MR. CHARLES W. WILLIAMS WYNN TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

April 6, 1818.

Duke of Clarence is at length accepted by a Princess of Saxe-Meiningen, and Kent by Saxe-Coburg. It is generally reported that an application is to be made for a considerable increase of establishment to every one of them. This will, I think, stick considerably in the throats of a Parliament so near dissolution. Indeed, it requires some strength of digestion to pass it. The house has begun on the Leather Bill, and, as far as one can judge, from present appearances, Government will be beaten, and there is a great contrast between their benches and those opposite to them. At this moment, the number on the Speaker's left, is considerably more than one-half above that to his right.

The quarter's return of Finance is infinitely more favourable than could have been expected.

Ever yours,
CH. W. W. W.

MR. CHARLES W. WILLIAMS WYNN TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Whitehall, April 8, 1818.

MY DEAR BUCKINGHAM,

The loss of the Leather-tax Repeal Bill, was solely attributable to the impossibility of persuading those who wished to speak against it, to let the debate close. At the time I wrote to you, there was a considerable majority against Government, whose friends came in slowly and unwillingly. Duncannon told me that he saw eighteen come down during the last hour for Ministers, and only one for Opposition. All your force mustered, but Stanhope, after waiting till he endangered his dinner, paired off with Lord Walpole; Watkin did the same.

I hear that a few evenings ago, the Queen dropt her fan at York House, and Humbug stooped with so much alacrity to pick it up, that the exertion created so parlous a split, and produced such a display, that there was nothing left to the bride's imagination. Nothing remained but for the royal brothers to interpose their screen, and for him to retire as fast as he could. It was then proposed, that he should go home, but he declined this, "As the Duke of York vas so much more large, dat he vas sure his breeches would go on over all." The valet was called, the Duke's breeches drawn on over the poor remains of Humbug's, and succeeded to admiration.

Prince Regent's gout seems the natural consequence of the two songs, with which he favoured the Foreign Ministers. There are two very different accounts of the addition to be proposed to the incomes of the sweet young Princes. One says, £6,000 a year each to all, including Cumberland; the other double that sum, and to Clarence, £20,000. I am inclined to believe in the latter, though the most improbable, as Lord Grenville heard it *confidentially* from a quarter likely to be well informed. Do not mention it, for it is most probable that such an exorbitant demand cannot be persisted in, particularly after ministers have declared their inability to give up the smallest tax; or that it will at least be postponed till a new Parliament.

I talked a little to Arbuthnot on Monday, on the impolicy of Government continuing to fight a question on which they had been twice beaten, and never yet carried by a larger majority than eight, and he justified on the ground of the necessity of giving up next year, a revenue of three millions from tea and spirits. As yet, there is no defalcation, indeed, an increase; but the Americans are making their arrangements to establish depôts on the opposite coasts, so that it cannot be expected that the present duties can be maintained beyond this year. Lord Grenville has been much alarmed by the reported plan of issuing Stock Debentures, but no one can tell at all, what it is to be. I am very glad to hear that you are coming to town, as I trust it is a proof that Lady Buckingham continues to improve. I have just heard (what probably you will see detailed in the Courier), that Lord Palmerston was about an hour ago, shot in the back by a mad half-pay officer, as he was going up stairs at the War-Office. The man put the pistol close to him; but as Lord Palmerston fortunately turned at the moment, the ball only grazed, or rather ploughed, instead of entering, but has made a severe and painful, though not a dangerous wound.

Ever affectionately yours,
Ch. W. W. W.

P.S. The man was a lieutenant in the 62nd, of the name of Davies, and is said to have been before confined for insanity.

I hear that the wound is only a laceration of the muscles of the back, and is not likely to be painful, but Lord Palmerston is ordered to be kept quiet for fear of fever.

On the 8th of April, as Lord Palmerston was ascending the steps of the Horse-Guards, after alighting from his horse, a pistol was discharged at him by a half-pay lieutenant, named Davies, and the ball struck him above the hip, grazing the skin, and producing a contusion on the back; had he not turned quickly round when passing the turn of the bannisters, the ball must have taken a fatal direction. Providentially he was only slightly hurt.

CHAPTER XII.

[1818.]

REPORTS OF MINISTERIAL CHANGES—INCREASE OF INCOME TO THE ROYAL DUKES—MARQUIS WELLESLEY PROPOSES TO JOIN THE GRENVILLES—THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM OFFERS A SEAT TO THE HON W. C. PLUNKETT (LORD PLUNKETT) — GENERAL ELECTION — PROSPECTS OF OPPOSITION—STATE OF THE GOVERNMENT—THE NEW ROYAL DUCHESSES.

CHAPTER XII.

THE following letters from the brother of the celebrated Lady Hester Stanhope, afford another illustration of the honourable character of the connection that existed between the Marquis of Buckingham, and the members of Parliament who partially owed their seats to his influence. The reports of office were, it is evident, now becoming more distinct, but no doubt they were circulated purposely by Ministers.

HONOURABLE LIEUTENANT-COLONEL STANHOPE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Malf Moon Street, Wednesday.

MY DEAR LORD BUCKINGHAM,

With regard to the Salt Duties, I am perfectly of your opinion; but with regard to the Leather, there appears a good deal to be said on both sides, for Althorpe's statements do not seem to me to be borne out by the papers before the House. That there has been a gradual decline of the trade, and a diminution of the number of tanners, but not a greater one than took place in all branches of trade connected with war; but I am very willing to vote for the repeal of the additional duties, *if it be understood that one is to agree to* *any* financial arrangements which may be proposed for augmenting other taxes, or laying on new ones; for I understand there will not be above a million, even supposing these taxes to continue, and if you take away two millions, there will be a most alarming and fatal deficiency; and I do not see what a Chancellor of the Exchequer can do, if he is driven out of several productive taxes without the House agreeing to lay on other taxes. The object of the Opposition is to force down the establishments; and unless you are of the same opinion, I think we should be careful of not falling into the trap. You do not say a word about the Malt-Tax, which would compensate for the loss of the others, the repeal of which has only had the effect of raising the price of porter.

You may depend upon the truth of the armies being withdrawn, but I hear that the Allies were to keep up a large army of observation, paid with the French contributions. This, probably, they would have had to resort to at the end of the five years, and, although it does not destroy the danger, may palliate it.

Reports are as follows:

You to be Ambassador in France, or Lord of the Admiralty.

Lord Wellesley to go to India.

Lord Sidmouth and Vansittart to go out; Lord C * * * and Peel to come in. Frankland Lewis or Charles Wynn to go to Ireland. Odds betted on this.

There is some talk of Lord H * * * going out.

There is some talk of a dissolution now.

I rather meant to have gone to Paris during the recess, but I hold it better not, as some would shoot, &c., by mistake, and others on purpose, and either would do.

Do let me hear from you a little more in detail, about your financial views, in future; for I think I understood that, at present, you were against any further reduction of our establishments.

Ever affectionately yours,

J. H. S.

HONOURABLE LIEUTENANT-COLONEL STANHOPE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Half Moon Street, Monday.

MY DEAR LORD B.,

Is there any chance of your coming up, as it would save me writing a letter; for I wish to know your way of thinking on several points, on which I have no means of forming an opinion for myself, and am, therefore, anxious to know those of others. They are all financial. I quite agree in all the arguments used against the salt duties, and meant to have voted against them. The leather duties are not so convincing; for the decrease of consumption is proved by the papers before the house not to be greater than the diminution of every other article so connected with one, as shoes are. Therefore, I did not vote at all, as I wished not to go against Wynn. Now I have my own quirks about the lottery, supposing several of these things to be carried against Government. Althorpe's feeling, he avowed, was, by forcing down the revenue, to force reductions inconsistent with our safety. I think we should take care not to fall into the same trap: for, I fear, from what I hear, that Van's glorious prospects will not be realised. Therefore, all objections to taxes must be in the way of substitution, and not of reduction. If, then, these taxes are taken away, producing a million and a half, or more, what ought to be substituted? What is your feeling about the malt-tax? and, in short, what do you think on the general subject?

I got off the other night with rather flying colours.

I suppose you have heard that an *illustrious* female is supposed to have committed forgery, in more than one instance.

I can now tell you for *certain* that the armies are to be withdrawn, but that a corps of observation is to be formed to keep France in check. My brother has received a challenge from Count Oudinot, which of course he does not mean to accept. Remember me to Lady Buckingham and Temple.

Ever affectionately yours,

J. H. S.

HONOURABLE LIEUTENANT-COLONEL STANHOPE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Half Moon Street, Friday night.

MY DEAR LORD B.

Fremantle communicated to me your letter; and as I am quite unable to judge of such a question, I cannot otherwise than agree with your proposal of voting for a Committee, till I understand something of the matter. As far as the restriction for one year, I think that it is necessary, in consequence of the enormous loans taking place, which loans could not be impeded without totally overthrowing all the calculations and plans of the allies.

The day before yesterday I received a private note from Lord Liverpool, requesting me to call on him yesterday. I asked several Government people I met in the evening, if they heard of anything going on, and was answered in the negative. I, of course, answered the note, and went to Fife House accordingly, where I found, to my surprise, a large meeting assembled. On hearing the subject, I determined to give my opinion there, as it was a question of peculiar delicacy to me, and one on which I must take my own line. On hearing the propositions, which were an addition of

£19,000 a year to the Duke of Clarence, with an outfit of the same, and a jointure of £8000 in the event of his death, and an addition of £12,000, with an outfit of ditto, to the Duke of Kent, Cumberland, Cambridge, with £9000 jointures, I stated distinctly that the Duke of Clarence's match was a national object, and ought to be provided for, but the quantum to be left to discussion; but as for the others, I certainly could not vote for any. I think I shall, after voting for the first, stay away, and not vote in the rest. A long conversation occurred in the House, on the message and address; and I never saw so strong a feeling against the proposal as existed in the House. Government members rose one after another to state that, although they should oppose B's. Amendment, they should not vote for the proposition of the Government. I believe if they try it, they will be beat two to one; but I have no doubt they will modify it before to-morrow. Nothing ever was so imprudent as their coming down with such a message, at such a moment as just before a dissolution; for even if they lose it, the odium will still exist.

I told Wynn, &c., in the House of what passed. The former seemed to think I had better have gone away, as it appears like being a settled supporter of Government attending such a meeting. I confess I differ with him. To have gone to such a meeting, knowing what it was, is a different question; but the only honest and manly way of acting was as I did, at least, in my own opinion; and there never can be that similarity between Wynn and me, as I act on Pitt principles, and he has a line of his own. I am happy to hear you are coming up so soon. I meet you on Wednesday at dinner.

Yours ever affectionately,

J. H. Stanhope.

P. S. I find that you come up to-morrow, so I send this to Pall-Mall.

HONOURABLE LIEUTENANT-COLONEL STANHOPE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Half Moon Street, Wednesday.

MY DEAR LORD BUCKINGHAM,

I take your letter as it is meant, and as all your other conduct has ever been to me, as the kindest possible. I never did consider our connection as more than a trial, and you may recollect my expressing my joy that there was such a short trial allowed before we formed more permanent and clear engagements. You will, I am sure, bear witness that I have never altered my line from what I first proposed, and I assure you that, from the moment of my return to England last autumn, I never expected that I should be again returned for Buckingham. You have acted in the most explicit, honourable, and kind manner by me, but I should have been unworthy of that friendship which has dictated your conduct, if I had acted otherwise than I have done. I must say one word about the meeting—that, out of delicacy to you, I would not have gone, had I known what it was; but, on my honour, I did believe that it was a private interview, and I could guess no other reason but some proposal to yourselves. With regard to the rest, I acted as I thought right, and, *had the other Members there been equally honest,* the Government would not have sustained the lamentable humiliation which they did that night in the House.

I have been anxious, from feelings of affection and delicacy to you, to go as nearly your road as possible, and your letter will make no difference on that score. On the present question, I must take my own line, and I thank you most truly for having set my mind at ease on that subject.

I hope, whenever the time comes when our political connection ceases, that you will feel as I do on the subject—

namely that my private friendship and affection for you is rather increased than diminished by our little political excursion together.

I shall not get away to dinner, as it is impossible to pair on such a subject, when there are so many shades of difference, but I will call on you to-morrow.

Yours most affectionately,
J. H. STANHOPE.

The next communication is one of more than ordinary importance—as much from the eminence of the writer, as from the object that led him to volunteer a junction with the Grenvilles. For some time, the Marquis Wellesley had found himself almost isolated in the struggle of parties—a spectator, rather than a combatant. He had seen his confidential friend, without whom, he had refused to accept office, join the ranks of his opponents, as regardless of old engagements and obligations, as though his once honoured colleague had never existed, and now no one could be more eloquent in their support, or more bitter against Opposition. The Marquis had gained no advantage from maintaining an attitude of observation, and sought support as the first step towards more active operations.

MARQUIS WELLESLEY TO SIR WILLIAM BURROUGHS, BART.

Richmond, May 8, 1818. Friday night.

MY DEAR SIR,

The message which you were so kind as to convey to me from Lord Buckingham, was most grateful to every sentiment which I have cherished since the first dawn of my public life. I, therefore, receive his Lordship's kind communication, as a most acceptable testimony of his continued regard; and I could not receive any favour, which I should estimate more highly, than such a mark of the good will of that distinguished family, for which I entertain the greatest respect and the warmest affection.

For Lord Grenville, I have ever entertained, and shall, while I retain any spirit of heart, or power of understanding, preserve the most ardent affection, and the most exalted feelings of veneration. No person knows him better, perhaps no person so well, as I do; and, (notwithstanding some occasional acrimony in Parliament,) no person can love, respect, or admire his great public and private character, more sincerely and cordially: I lament beyond all the accidents of my life, the misfortunes which have separated us in public transactions; and I should rejoice in any occasion, which might unite us in one cause.

Lord Buckingham knows the true friendship which I bore to his excellent father, and my sense of gratitude for the kindness, and my attachment to the memory of that most worthy personage. His Lordship also cannot doubt my sincere regard for him; my gratitude for his able and spirited exertions in my defence; and my high consideration for his claims to the greatest honours and distinctions of the state.

In every view, I wish Lord Buckingham to be persuaded that my feelings towards himself and his family remain unabated, and therefore, unlimited in respect and affection.

The differences which have occurred in Parliament, are now past, and may certainly be considered rather as matters of history, than of immediate practical effect. None of those differences could embarrass practical union in public affairs.

So entirely do I feel myself untouched by any sense of those unfortunate disagreements, that I declare myself to be at liberty to unite at any moment with Lord Buckingham, and his friends, either in office, or out of office, in any course of public action.

I add, that I shall always be happy to act with them; out of office I shall always wish to consult their opinions; and, if any new system of Government is to be formed, I think it can never be founded on a basis of sufficient strength, without the aid of his Lordship and his friends.

Lord Buckingham will therefore understand, that I am cordially disposed to act with his Lordship, under any circumstances which may occur; and that at all times I must entertain the highest consideration for his personal claims, and for the general right of his family and connections.

With these sentiments, however, although perfectly free from obligation of any description, I think that I should not consult my own principles of honour, nor those of honest policy and plain sense, nor should I assist Lord Buckingham, in any degree, if I were to enter into any separate league with his Lordship and his friends, at this moment, for the purpose of pursuing any course of action, hostile to the present Administration, and distinct from that pursued by the Opposition, with a tendency not friendly to that party.

Such engagements would not aid any future operations of the general public service; but might injure my means of contributing to the great end of relieving the country from the difficulties and dangers which surround all parts of the empire. These cannot be surmounted, until a strong sense shall exist of the necessity of invigorating the Executive Administration, by infusing some portion of common sense into the Cabinet.

I shall always be ready to assist in that most useful

Reform; and always happy to receive the advice, and to co-operate with the force of Lord Buckingham and his friends, for this salutary purpose. To what extent I may differ from the Opposition, or from the Government in this pursuit, I know not. I know only, that I am perfectly free, and that I am resolved to maintain my freedom; and I am convinced that Lord Buckingham's good sense, and liberal spirit, will approve my determination, not merely as honest and honourable, but as the most direct and easy road towards an effectual union with him and his friends. At all events, he will be persuaded, that I acknowledge this communication to be a new and strong obligation of friendship and gratitude, which cannot be dissolved by any ordinary political event.

This is the substance, my dear Sir, of the observations which I submitted to you this morning, when you conveyed to me Lord Buckingham's obliging message. You expressed a wish that I should commit them to writing, lest any error should arise from your statement. Although I should have relied with confidence on your representation of my sentiments, at your desire I trouble you with this note.

Always, my dear Sir, with true respect and affection,
Your faithful friend, and obliged servant,
WELLESLEY.

The two notes next to be presented to the reader, will not be found without interest—a portion of which is due to the name of the writer, a part to the additional proof they afford of Lord Buckingham's attention to the claims of talent.

HONOURABLE W. C. PLUNKETT TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Dublin, May 13th, 1818.

MY LORD,

I have this moment received your Lordship's most kind and gratifying communication. I should have no hesitation in at once availing myself of so distinguished a mark of your good opinion, were it not under the apprehension that the periods of attendance which I could (without heavy professional sacrifices) command, would be so limited as to deprive you, during the greater part of the Session, of more efficient services. Subject to this drawback, there is no arrangement which could afford me so much satisfaction; and with respect to it, I am in your Lordship's judgment, and have great pleasure, at the same time, in being able to say that, so far as I can form a judgment at present, I shall be able to disconcert the conspiracy, for I can give it no better name, which has been formed against me at College. In a few days, I shall see my way clearly, and will take the liberty of informing you how I am placed.

I am always with a very warm sense of your Lordship's friendship.

Your obliged, and very obedient servant,

W. C. PLUNKETT.

HONOURABLE W. C. PLUNKETT TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

June 20.

MY LORD,

I have great pleasure in being able to tell you that our College election ended yesterday, very triumphantly; though with an apparent majority of only four, I was legally entitled to a majority of sixteen or seventeen.

I never knew an instance in which the public feeling was more strongly expressed.

I rejoice that I am not to encroach on a patronage which is certain to be exercised for the public good; and I do assure your Lordship, that I never can cease to have the warmest sense of gratitude for the kindness with which your Lordship has, in this instance, honoured me.

I have the honour to be,
My Lord
Your Lordship's obliged and very faithful servant,
W. C. Plunkett.

The writer rose to the highest eminence in his profession, became Lord Chancellor of Ireland, and was ennobled with the the title of Lord Plunkett.

A general election now thoroughly agitated society—party spirit ran even higher than usual, and extraordinary efforts were made by the leading Whigs, to lessen the Parliamentary strength of the Government—with what effect will be seen in the correspondence.

RIGHT HONOURABLE THOMAS GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Cashiobury, Friday, July 3, 1818.

My dear Lord B.,

I am glad to find that an accident of so serious a description has been attended with no real injury. You have walked, like Queen Emma, over burning plough-shares, and have proved the innocence of your blood, by the rapidity with which the wound has been healed.

I had heard from Praed, that Cavendish could not succeed, and, therefore, was prepared for the result. It is right to make the best of everything; but I confess I am less sanguine than you appear to be, as to the favourable consequences which you look for, in the future state of the borough and county. The friends of the disappointed candidate, will be rendered sore by their defeat, which they will certainly attribute rather to our want of co-operation, than to their own neglect and mismanagement; and the striking superiority of our interest, which appeared at both of the elections, will increase the jealousy of our family influence, and, perhaps, awaken more active combinations against it. Yet, I remain perfectly persuaded, that it is our business, in both these elections, to stand upon our own footing, and to make it distinctly understood, that no interference is intended beyond what is avowed. I hope, therefore, we shall wear our laurels meekly and modestly. If the Lonsdale family had attended to these considerations, their power would have been undisturbed, and Lord Lonsdale would have saved £90,000, which he will now have to pay, whether he succeeds or not in resisting the petition of Cockermouth, and the rival candidate for Westmoreland.

You need not, however, be proud of Sir J. A.'s plumpers for George; his doing so, was the result of the earnest intreaties of Lord Ossulston, by whom he is generally influenced. The *amiable* Lord Ossulston was maddened with rage, at finding that the Duke of Devonshire refused to bring him in; and forgetting all his former obligations, he revenged himself, by persuading Sir J. A. not to give any second vote to Cavendish. Sir R. Walpole had very truly said, that political gratitude is only a lively sense of the favours that one expects to receive; and this conduct of Lord Ossulston is a nasty instance of the truth of this remark.

I do begin to hope that Ebrington will succeed; for he has written to Tierney, to say, that he thinks himself safe as to resident voters, and wishes Tierney to pair off the London voters, rather than have them sent down.

Cavendish would have carried Sussex, where Sugden had nearly stolen in. D. North said he had a good title, for he had lived in closer intimacy than anybody, with all the old *Whigs*.

I go to Dropmore, the end of next week, and to Ryde whenever you and Lady B. are there.

I rejoice in Plunkett.

I send your letter to Lord Grenville.

MR. W. H. FREMANTLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Stanhope Street, July 6, 1818.

I perfectly agree in thinking that with good management, their exultation will be our profit, but be assured, the only mode of making it so, is by keeping at present perfectly quiet, and even in being more shy of communication than you were. I hear from all hands connected with the Government, that they are *au désespoir*, and it is universally said, they must look out for strength, and new model their Treasury Bench. There can be no doubt of the necessity of this, and, unless Government is totally overthrown, your quarter must be the one referred to. Vansittart is at present the difficulty; Lord Sidmouth will not give him up, if his strength in the Cabinet is diminished. Peel certainly does not go to Ireland again, (as report says, and is believed), and he will, no doubt, succeed Vansittart. It signifies little, as to calculate how they are to make their arrangements, but as to standing as they are, it is impossible.

Lord Lansdowne has had a noble windfall, by the death of

Lord Kerry, who has left him his whole landed estates in Ireland and England; estimated at £9 or £10,000 per annum. He was a very distant connexion. You have no idea how crestfallen the friends of Government are by all these elections, and more on the cry against Ministry. Lord Binning, Warrender, and this description, are quite down; and the Opposition, possessing themselves of St. James's-street, in a kind of triumph indescribable. Brougham has lost his election, but polled nearly 900 votes, and the cry of the country, outrageous against the Lonsdales; and I think the Government disliking the exertion for *two of his sons.* I wish Romilly had not mentioned the shortening the duration of Parliaments, and still more, that Lord Nugent had not in his speech at Aylesbury — otherwise Romilly was very temperate, and his mob, particularly so.

Think of Lord George Cavendish voting for Burdett and Romilly? I have ordered Tindal to qualify Tom Fremantle for Aylesbury voting. I see we have *Sir Scrope* in our ranks by the death of his brother. I shall keep this open till 5 o'clock, if there is anything to say. I leave town on Thursday for good.

The Queen is lingering on. The double marriage is to take place this week, but whether at Carlton House, or Kew, is not decided. We shall then have seven royal duchesses in England—alas! How they are to be disposed of, I know not. Lord Grey was to leave town to-day. The Government admit they have lost 14 in England, the Opposition say 23, I think full 20. Ireland will be much the same, and in Scotland the Government, will gain one as it is said, but then there can be no doubt on the whole, their numbers will be reduced 20, which in a division, makes the difference of 40, and the new members, of course, more active attendants.

Four o'clock, Brookes's.

Lord Archibald Hamilton has got his election. Brougham has given up. The Opposition are now signing a general requisition to Tierney, to induce him to take the lead at the opening of the Session; Brougham has agreed to this, and has promised to obey completely all orders under Tierney. Brougham recommended himself particularly to the Cavendishes and Lord Morpeth, by his conduct in Cumberland, where a great opposition was threatened, and put down by the interference of Brougham. At present, therefore, all is promised success with the Opposition, but we know in what manner this is likely to succeed, when Burdett and his crew come into the House. Peel has *undoubtedly resigned*, and in a letter which has been seen from him, he talks of spending the winter in Italy. This, however, can never be—again, I repeat to you, that Government *must* be new moulded, and your line is, at present, to hold quiet. The Opposition are preparing also a written agreement, for attendance during next Session, and I have no doubt for a time it will be maintained.

Ever your's,
W. H. F.

The Queen had another attack yesterday; should she die immediately, I mean before August, the Parliament must sit—this would be more fatal to Government.

MR. W. H. FREMANTLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Stanhope Street, July 15, 1818.

MY DEAR LORD,

I delayed answering your last, as I was obliged to come here last night, for an entertainment at Carlton House; and I thought I might there pick up something worth telling you.

There was a grand display of all the Royal Duchesses, one more ugly than another. I think the manners of the Duchess of Clarence the best; and the look of the Duchess of Kent—the latter rather *en bon point*; the former, thinner than Madame de Lieven. The thing was dull and heavy, and I thought people much out of spirits. The only Oppositionists I saw, were, Duke of Leinster, Lord Morpeth, Sir Watkin, and myself (if we can be so termed). The Regent looking very well. Most of the Ministers there, but not holding up their heads; and, indeed, I hear the tone and language is very low. I had some conversation with Harrison, who was there, who was full of the same opinions, of the necessity of our junction, and lamenting, and expressing astonishment at the undecided conduct of Lord Liverpool. I treated it much more coolly than before; said it was impossible we could continue neutral; and the present state of the Government and Parliament was such as to render it, in my opinion, impracticable for the present Cabinet to manage the public business, when the Session should open. In this, he seemed to agree, but went on lamenting, and expressing his personal regret. All this is worth nothing.

I saw Tierney in the morning, and had much conversation with him. He told me he had actually gone over the list of the House of Commons, as far as the returns are now completed or known, and he calculates on those who were decided Opposition in the last Parliament; that is, those who always desired notes to be sent them, and who were ready to vote on any question. Of these, he considered there were a hundred and forty, in the last, and a hundred and seventy-two or three, in this; and he did not take into consideration, on either side, the doubtfuls or uncertains, which might operate both ways, and make a calculation questionable. This, therefore, with the activity of new members, and the state of public opinion, must make it an Opposition, which, if well managed, must break up any Government. At the same time, I perfectly feel the force of all you say on this subject, and which has been so strongly proved by the experience of the last ten years, that the demagogues, and Brougham and Bennet, &c. &c. will talk of submission, and reasonable and fair opposition, and do everything to destroy the effect of it. This has been uniformly done by Burdett; and it is his interest, and the interest of others of the same description, to do the same.

The Queen is dying, and I really myself think she will not last till August; but I hear now, in town, that, even should she die before the writs are returnable, it is not intended to meet Parliament, and enter into the subject of the Windsor establishment; but to leave the thing, as the Bill enables them to do, under the control of the Council, and rest their security upon the Parliament, when it meets. This shows them to be more confident in their numbers, and opinion of the new Parliament, than I should have thought them to be.

I understand, Lord and Lady Spencer are at Ryde; and Tierney set off, with his family, for the same place, yesterday; so, if you go, you will be in the thick of them.

It is said, the Regent is going to attend a grand Regatta off the Isle of Wight, to be given by the Sailing Club

Society. The Marquis of Anglesea at the head. I don't know whether you belong to it. I dare say, it is only talked of, and will come to nothing, as the Prince cannot leave London while the Queen is in her present state. All the Princes are delaying, from day to day, their departure abroad, expecting, and looking out for the plunder to arise from the Queen's death.

There is no doubt, the Duke of Gloucester is going immediately, without the Duchess. I think he judges very foolishly, and will lose much of his public hold by it, and besides missing the opportunity of playing a game, in case of the death.

I am leaving town in an hour, and shall not return till Parliament meets. I shall remain at Englefield Green, undoubtedly, till the end of September; and then, probably, go to the sea side for a few weeks. Should you come near us, we shall be delighted to see you.

Ever, my dear Lord, most sincerely yours,

W. H. F.

CHAPTER XIII.

[1818.]

ROYAL MARRIAGES—PROPOSAL FOR INCREASING THE INCOME OF THE PRINCES OF THE ROYAL FAMILY OPPOSED IN PARLIAMENT—CONGRESS AT AIX-LA-CHAPELLE — CELEBRATION OF THE MARRIAGES OF THE DUKES OF CLARENCE AND KENT—THE GRENVILLE INTEREST IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS—ERRONEOUS ESTIMATE OF THE ABILITIES OF THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON — DEATH OF THE HON. W. ELLIOTT — MR. BROUGHAM AND UNIVERSITY REFORM—DEATH OF SIR SAMUEL ROMILLY —DEATH AND FUNERAL OF QUEEN CHARLOTTE—DIVISION OF THE QUEEN'S JEWELS—MR. SAMUEL ROGERS.

CHAPTER XIII.

The Royal marriages which followed that of the Princess Charlotte, united the Princess Mary to the Duke of Gloucester, within a few months, and in the course of the summer of 1818, the Princess Augusta of Hesse, to the Duke of Cambridge, the Princess Elizabeth, to the Prince of Hesse Homburg, the Princess Adelaide of Saxe Meiningen, to the Duke of Clarence, and the Princess Victoria of Leiningen to the Duke of Kent. The last, we are peculiarly bound to notice, for having restored to the people of this country all those advantages which were supposed to have been entombed with their beloved Princess Charlotte: On April 13th, those of the Dukes of Clarence and Cambridge, were brought under the notice of Parliament, by a message from the Prince Regent; but the proposition for increasing the income of all the Royal Dukes, met with considerable opposition. Mr. Sumner proposed an amendment to reduce the grant of £10,000 to £6000, to the Duke of Clarence, which was carried by a majority of 195 to 184. On April 16th, Lord Castlereagh made a communication, that in consequence of this decision, the Duke of Clarence had broken off the negociation respecting his marriage. The grant, however, was subsequently allowed. Then came on a discussion respecting the allowance to the junior Dukes, which created a still more strong debate — but the proposed grant of £6000 a year was carried, except for the Duke of Cumberland, which sum the Duchess was allowed, should she survive her husband; the same provision was made for the Princess of Hesse Homburg. On May 15th, an additional grant of £6000 a year to the Duke of Kent, was also carried.

The marriages of the Dukes of Clarence and of Kent were celebrated the same day, July 13th, in the Queen's drawing-room, looking into Kew Gardens, in the presence of her Majesty, the Prince Regent, the Royal Family, and the great officers of State. The Royal brides were given away by the Prince Regent, and the ceremony performed by the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishop of London. A sumptuous banquet followed at five o'clock, at which the Queen was prevented being present by indisposition—tea being drunk in the cottage in Kew Gardens, near the Pagoda. In the evening, the Duke and Duchess of Kent proceeded in Prince Leopold's carriage to Claremont, and the Duke and Duchess of Clarence started to return to his Royal Highness's apartments in St. James's Palace.

Parliament was dissolved on the 10th of June, by the Prince Regent in person, whose speech was little more than a studied eulogium on Parliament, for assisting in defeating the common enemy. A general election followed. Lord Nugent was returned for Aylesbury, Lord Temple for Buckinghamshire, Sir George Nugent, Bart., and William Henry Fremantle for Buckingham, Charles W. Williams Wynn for Montgomeryshire, and Dr. Phillimore for St. Mawes.

In September, the Congress of the Allied Sovereigns, referred to in the following note, assembled at Aix-la-Chapelle—the King of Prussia arriving on the 26th, and the Emperors of Austria and Russia on the 28th: they were also represented by three or more Plenipotentiaries. Lord Castlereagh, the Duke of Wellington and Mr. Canning appearing for Great Britain, and the Duke de Richelieu representing France. The ostensible cause of their assembling, was to arrange for the withdrawal of the foreign force from the dominions of Louis XVIII. but amusement was so liberally mingled with diplomacy, that the scene rather exhibited the features of a motley carnival, than one of the most important assemblies ever called together for a great political object. There were fashionable re-unions presided over by the Princess Lieven and Viscountess Castlereagh, in which refinement and beauty were the leading features. In strange contrast were pugilistic encounters, honoured by the patronage of Prince Metternich, Prince Charles of Prussia, the Prince de Salms and other foreign dignatories, which apparently excited equal admiration. Madame Catalani, the matchless vocalist, contributed liberally to the gratification of the present, and Mademoiselle Lenormand, the celebrated Parisian fortune-teller, drew as largely on those of the future.

The result of the deliberations of the Congress, appeared in a declaration, which emanated from them, in which, they expressed their determination to maintain the existing state of Europe; as they affected France, they were no less important, for a treaty was entered into, with conditions, determining the removal of the foreign troops, before the 30th of November, on which day the sums due for their maintenance, &c. were to be paid. And it was arranged, that in consideration of this evacuation being earlier than had previously been agreed, France should pay the Allies 265,000,000 francs, £10,600,000. Protocols now followed each other rapidly, having for their principal object, the accession of France to the Alliance, and the arrangement of a force, adequate to crush any revolutionary outbreak that might be attempted in that kingdom.[1]

MR. W. H. FREMANTLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Englefield Green, August 6, 1818.

MY DEAR LORD,

I waited till Hervey had been here, who came with the Duke of Wellington to England, to hear if I could pick up anything worth relating to you; but I think there is nothing further to say than what we learn from the papers. I see the Duke is evidently greatly anti M. Cazes, and that the latter is completely in possession of the King of France; and they consider the whole of this pretended conspiracy to be a fabrication of M. Cazes for the purpose of getting hold of C——'s papers, which they have seized.

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[1] The proceedings of the Congress are described by Alison—"History of Europe from the fall of Napoleon," Vol. I., p. 589; and illustrative information will be found in the correspondence of the principal English Ministers with Lord Castlereagh. "Castlereagh Despatches," Vol. XI. and XII.

The Government are delighted the Queen has outlived the 4th, and that they have been enabled to prorogue Parliament. The result of the Irish and Scotch elections has not realized their hopes with regard to diminishing their loss in England; and I still think they will come to you before the meeting.

I differ with Lord Grenville with regard to Lord Wellesley. I don't see what they gain by him. He has no parliamentary interest *in this House*, and they know how impracticable he is; and many of them are personally offended with him. Should they see the prospect of separating Lord Lansdowne, he would undoubtedly be the object to which they would look; but this cannot be done without breaking up the whole Government; and this they will not do. You may rest assured they mean to go on, under all circumstances; and, submitting to be disgraced as they have heretofore been—there is no reason why they cannot.

I cannot get a guess what is intended for the Duke of Wellington, when the army return, which is certainly, *at this moment*, intended in November. He cannot remain idle; and, if I were to hazard a conjecture, it would be in favour of his taking the station of Lord Liverpool, First Minister. Of course, I have no reason for this, more than guess; but I know the latter is disposed to go; and I know the former has the fullest confidence in his talents for a minister. I doubt if the Regent would like it. I should think not; and I am sure the country would look upon it as a Military

Government. Let me know how this conjecture of mine strikes you. Castlereagh is preparing for the Congress, which is of all foolish measures the most so, and can lead to no good. A conference of Kings is the foundation of jealousy, and alarm, and suspicion; and if it is only (as professed to be) for the purpose of deciding on the question of military occupation of France, it could have been done much better by diplomatic arrangement.

They speak of Lord Pembroke wishing to replace Sir Charles Stuart at Paris. I should not think this likely.

I hear, what I believe to be true, that Lord Althorpe is to head the Opposition, professedly so. He has given up his hounds; and, though at present under deep affliction, his natural turn is politics; and he has full ambition enough o covet such a station; and taking him altogether, the Opposition could not have a better person. The Queen cannot, in my opinion, last many days, though one is often amazed at the length of time an old person fights against the last pang. The private accounts *I hear,* place her in extreme and hourly danger.

I expect the Duke of Wellington at dinner here on Saturday, in his way to Stratfieldsay. He talks of returning to the Continent on the 10th; but I suppose he will not go till after the Regent's birth-day on the 12th.

Ever most truly yours,
W. H. F.

The erroneous character of Mr. Fremantle's speculations about the Duke of Wellington's capacity as minister has been fully proved; it is, however, but justice to state that his was the common opinion of a certain class of politicians: indeed, it was then and long afterwards the fashion with Opposition to affect a low estimate of his Grace's intelligence. Many who did so, had reason, subsequently, to be ashamed of their injustice. A communication from Lord Liverpool to Lord Castlereagh, dated October 23rd,[1] announcing Lord Mulgrave's intention to resign his office of Master-General of the Ordnance, in favour of his Grace, shows not only how highly the Duke was estimated by the Government, but the honourable feelings that actuated its members, in considering the position of the country, before their own consequence and advantage. Towards the conclusion of the next letter, the writer is nearer the truth in his statement respecting the position of the Government.

MR. W. H. FREMANTLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Brighton, October 18, 1818.

MY DEAR LORD,

I have not written to you, because I have really had nothing to say; and though this place is as full as it can hold, I don't find one word worth relating to you.

I met Mr. Chronicle Perry, this morning, who says the Potentates are quarrelling at Aix-la-Chapelle. I don't believe one word of it; for they are all in complete subjection to Alexander, who holds himself out, and acts as the Arbiter of Europe. Castlereagh is as much under his control, as the King of Prussia.[2]

The Duke of Wellington was to leave Aix, yesterday, to show his troops in review to the Emperor, and King of Prussia, and was doubtful whether he would go back to Aix:

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[1] "Castlereagh Correspondence." Vol. XII., p. 63.

[2] This is a mistake; another, still more glaring, follows.

but I suppose he will, for want of better to do. They write word, they shall be in England in November, to remain.

Not a word falls regarding the future destiny of the Duke. He must have some employment; and the retirement of Liverpool would not surprise me; the only doubt I entertain, is in his successor. I have always thought the Duke would attempt it. I know you differ in this, and I know it would be his ruin; but still, I think he looks to it, and fancies his name and character will maintain him.

Giles is here, and he says, he has seen the Opposition list of good men and true, which amounts to a hundred and eighty-three. For my own part, I don't much value this; for I think the Opposition will have very little ground to stand upon; that is, little of essential interest to propose. The Government will have to say, we have a secure and lasting peace; we have withdrawn our troops, and mean to reduce them. We have a very improving revenue, and we mean to open the cash payments at the Banks—why, then it comes to a question as to quantum of reduction of Army, on which, of course, great difference (even in the Opposition) will prevail; and Mr. Brougham's motion regarding Charities and Schools, on which more difficulty exists than at first presents itself.

I would ask, is it possible to alter anything in the foreign or domestic policy of the country, should the Government be changed? You may condemn what has passed, but you find it. And, therefore, my creed is, that nothing but a quarrel among themselves, or a schism among the Allies, can break up the present Government. I am not surprised at their conduct towards you. Till they feel themselves finished, they will do no more than keep up the flirtation: and I should think your only system is the continuance of neutrality. If we again embark in Opposition, we shall do it on worse grounds than you stood before, towards them, and with a more distant view, or indeed a certain bar to all connection with the existing Government.

We came here for a few days; but I shall leave it, the end of the week, and be at home early in November. We shall be happy to come to Stowe, at Christmas, but it must depend a little on the motions of Sir Felton and Lady Hervey, as, if they come to Englefield Green about that time, I am afraid I cannot leave them. However, there will be time, between this and then, to let you know.

Ever most truly yours,
W. H. F.

LORD GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Dropmore, October 30, 1818.

I received, this morning, the melancholy account of poor Elliot's[1] death; one of the greatest losses, both public and private, that could have been sustained. I was prepared to expect it, partly from the evident decline of his health, during the whole of last winter, and, still more, by the accounts I had lately heard of his state, which was such as seemed hardly to leave any hope of recovery.

The friendship and intimacy in which we lived, makes me regret him deeply; and I cannot but feel how important it would have been, that a person so thoroughly right-minded, and who had deservedly acquired so great a weight and authority with all parties, should have been at hand, to give somewhat of a better direction to the present strange and unsettled state of the House of Commons.

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[1] Right Honourable William Elliot, of Wells, the friend of Burke, of Windham, and of Grenville; an eloquent orator, an able statesman, and a man of the highest honour. The death of Francis Horner having been brought under the notice of the House of Commons, Mr. Elliot delivered a most impressive panegyric. On the 26th of October, he himself became an object worthy of eulogy equally warm and general. He died at Minto House, Roxburgh, whence his remains were brought to London for interment in the family vault at Reigate, in Surrey; the mourners being Lord Grenville, Right Honourable Thomas Grenville, Lord Holland, and Earls Minto, Bathurst, and Fitzwilliam.

The military reductions seem, this time, to be really made in good earnest, and under the impression, probably, that if the thing was not done *bonâ fide*, and, to a very great extent, by the Government, the House of Commons would take it out of their hands, and do it for them, to a still greater amount.

I do not wonder that the black Regiments are included in it, because the struggle would naturally be made, that on given numbers, the proportions of British force should not be lessened, by keeping up the blacks; and because I also know how clamorous the Planters are about those corps. But I am, on the other hand, persuaded that, for operations, whether of attack or defence, in the West Indies, [each of] our trained and disciplined corps of blacks, is worth three or four of Europeans. And if we are to have a war in Ceylon, I know not any troops so fit for it, as these were. Nor do I well understand what can be done with the men when they are disbanded.

I have seen Hodson[1] here to-day, and have had some talk with him about Brougham's report and pamphlet, which seems pretty plainly to threaten the two Universities with a Parliamentary visitation, by that Committee. The Report contains what ought naturally to alarm, not only the Universities, but all quiet men much more; viz., a formal recommendation to Parliament, to establish a national system of education, from which the teaching the doctrines of the Established Church, is to be *ex professo* excluded; and this, in tenderness to Dissenters, &c., who, it seems, must otherwise be excluded from the benefit of these schools. I think it would be pretty difficult for any man, who admits the force of this argument, and is ready to act upon it, to show why he allows those doctrines to be taught in the pulpit, and even authorizes an Established Clergy to collect tythes from the Dissenters, for teaching them.

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[1] The late Provost of Eton College.

I suppose you are aware that Hodson has taken upon him his high office; and I dare say you will not forget that one of its duties consists in giving dinners, for which purpose, occasional presents of game and venison do not come amiss.

My brother tells me, that he has urged you to take us in your way to Avington; and I know I need not tell you, that I have few greater pleasures than that of seeing you here.

Ever most affectionately yours,

G.

No death excited so profound an impression, as that of Sir Samuel Romilly. He was deeply affected, on the 29th of October, by the demise of his wife, whom he tenderly loved, and on the 1st of November, returned from the Isle of Wight, where Lady Romilly died, to his own residence in Russell Square, and under mental excitement, the following day terminated his existence with his own hand. He was a great loss to his party, and as a legal reformer, a loss to the nation. Unfortunately during the last year or two of his life, he had identified himself in the House of Commons, with a party advocating extreme opinions, that kept him aloof from the friends who had recognised his talent, and brought him forward in Government office. By the members of his profession, he was so much respected, that even the Lord Chancellor, who was in complete antagonism to him in politics, felt his absence from his usual place at the Chancery Bar so acutely, that the day after Sir Samuel's decease, his Lordship retired from the Court in the greatest agitation, as soon as he perceived the vacancy.[1] The acute sensibility that occasioned this lamentable termination of his career, was apparently hereditary, for one of his uncles, a distinguished merchant, possessed of considerable attainments, Mr. Isaac Romilly, F.R.S., died prematurely at the age of forty-nine, of a broken heart, seven days after the decease of his wife, with whom he had lived in the most perfect affection.[2]

The sons of Sir Samuel Romilly subsequently edited his Correspondence and Diary in three volumes; the work has gone through several editions, and is an interesting record of political events which has frequently been referred to in these volumes.

LORD GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Dropmore, November 6, 1818.

You will have seen the melancholy account of Romilly's end. Without being so very marvellous a person as our newspaper exaggerations have suddenly made him, he was, no doubt, a very considerable man in this country, of great talents and virtues, and with a very just, and in his profession, a singularly rare, sense of the many and great imperfections of our civil and criminal laws, and of the courts by which they are administered. And I have little doubt, that if he had lived, he would, in this Session, have been the real, while Tierney was, the nominal leader of the Opposition.

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[1] Twiss's "Life of Lord Chancellor Eldon," Vol. I., p. 572.

[2] See Epitaph, "Gentleman's Magazine," Vol. LXXXVIII., p. 391.

I have myself no fear of military reductions. Chance has done for us the very thing that we could most have wished—the very thing, at which English politicians, therefore, most grumble. It has thrown upon Russia, now the most powerful continental state, the task of defending the helpless kingdom of the Netherlands, against the invasions of France. It was one great fault of the settlement of Europe, at the last peace, that it seemed to cast that duty on Prussia, the weakest of the three; and now John Bull laments himself because Russia's power and influence is by accident made applicable in the same direction. As to the rest, they are arming, if they are arming at all, against each other, and not against us; and if the Netherlands remain unattackable, it will be long before any interest in Germany or Italy need touch us so nearly, as to bring us into the field.

Of naval reductions, I know no details; but I have little confidence in the wisdom of our directors in that line. Yet even there it must be remembered that we have now no European enemy, who can ever be opposed to us in a naval war. The financial difficulties of France are much more powerful obstacles to the *renewal* of her navy, than any present reduction can be to the revival of ours. Spain and the Baltic Powers are not worth naming. America is no doubt *growing* to be a powerful naval state; and if the Union hangs together, she may, in another century, be far more formidable to us than any European marine has ever been. But I believe the incredible blunders of our Government in the last American war, both on the lakes and at sea, have created both here and in the United States, an impression of the *actual* naval strength of the latter, as compared with this, which is quite ludicrously beyond the truth. On the whole, therefore, my opinion is favourable to reduction—great reduction—both in army and navy. The very rapid increase of our revenue, I ventured to foretel, in spite of croakings, and when Tierney told me that, if my anticipations proved correct, he would never open his mouth again on subjects of Finance. The fact has even exceeded, and is daily farther exceeding, my most sanguine hopes; and it is, in my opinion, an encouragement to fresh reductions of establishment; because it proves that, instead of our efforts in the financial line being hopeless, not much now remains to be done to enable us to return from a nominal and illusory to a real effective Sinking Fund. And, till we have done this, we have not made any provision for the performance of our prosperity, or even of our independence.

You should read a letter to Sir W. Scott, published in answer to Brougham's letter. It is a powerful, and, in many points, quite a conclusive reply; and it lays the ground of a stand, which I think myself bound to concur in making, in some shape or other, to protect Oxford and Cambridge, Eton, Westminster, and Winchester, from the threatened inquisition of a parliamentary visitation to be kept hanging over them at the pleasure of any chairman of any Committee of the House of Commons.

I am afraid you must excuse us for Christmas. The real truth is, that I am grown too old, and too lazy, to undertake for any excursions from home at that season; and, besides, it is more than likely that the near approach of the Session will fill our house with visitors at that time.

The present intention is, if the Queen dies before Christmas, to meet the 29th, and to proceed to business in the first days of January, allowing, as usual, five or six days for swearing in the members. Should she still struggle on, it is still intended not to postpone the meeting longer than the 14th of January, which will bring the business on about the 20th.

These details you may rely on; but as I saw them in a communication which was, in its other parts, confidential (not *to me*, as you may suppose), you should not repeat them, though I feel no difficulty in mentioning them to you for your own use; and they must, of course, before long be very generally known.

I wonder at Mackintosh,[1] whom I thought a man of too much sense and knowledge of the world to give any credit to such a story himself, or to believe that he can make it credible to others.

I have no faith in Liverpool's going out; but I expect that in some shape or other the Duke of Wellington will be brought forward. I thought Ireland would have been kept open for him. Perhaps, he might himself not choose that. The Ordnance is obvious enough, and, I suppose, not difficult to open; and the Prince Regent's death must now, whenever it happens, open to him the command of the army, which neither the Duke of Kent, nor Prince Leopold are now likely to be able to dispute with him. It is not likely, nor, at his age, would it, perhaps, be reasonable to be expected, though certainly his wisest course, that he should sit down satisfied with what he has done, and with a glory which he may lessen, but probably cannot augment, by engaging in our civil and political contentions.

I was in town two days ago; but I heard nothing of what is doing at Westminster upon the vacancy. There will, I suppose, be a fine scene of confusion; for the new writ cannot issue till the fourteen days of petitioning are past. Will it be Kinnaird, or Bruce, or Bennet, or Brougham?

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[1] Sir James Mackintosh.

The death of the Queen, which took place on the 17th of November, had been anticipated by the serious character of her protracted indisposition; which affliction her Majesty had borne with the same Christian serenity she had exhibited under her numerous severe trials. The amiable qualities of Queen Charlotte, her purity and dignity of character, will long be preserved among the pleasing traditions of the Court of England. The Marquis of Buckingham was one of the "supporters" of the Prince Regent, who attended as Chief Mourner at the funeral ceremony; and among the "assistants to the chief mourner," was Lord Grenville, who subsequently presented an address of condolence from the University of Oxford. The gossiping communications that follow, give the rumours of the day.

MR. CHARLES W. WILLIAMS WYNN TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Llangedwin, November 18, 1818.

I have omitted writing to you, my dear B. since we last met, since there has been no circumstance which has occurred worthy of communication and remark. I am here so completely out of the world, that I never hear a political speculation or report.

The loss of Romilly will, I think, be a severe one to his party; for though his weight was inconsiderable in the House, yet it was as great as that of any man they have left, except Tierney, and perhaps Brougham; and besides, he possessed very much of the confidence of a large body of persons out of the House, so that he formed a sort of connecting link between the Whigs, the Jacobins, and the Saints. He certainly produced benefit to the public by the persevering attention which he paid to the Criminal Law, and by the repeated discussions which he originated on that subject, but he had an inherent love of innovation, which would have made him the most dangerous man in the country if he had risen to the situation of Lord Chancellor. He was proud of saying that there was no one opinion which he formed since he was twenty, which he had ever changed; which is, in other words, that he had derived no benefit from experience.

Lord Grenville seems to be too much engrossed by Brougham's report and apprehension of the interference of an unhallowed Committee of the House of Commons, within the sacred precincts of Alma Mater, to think of anything else. I think him right, inasmuch as no case of abuse has ever been suggested sufficient to warrant so strong a measure as an enquiry by parliamentary visitation into the state of the Universities, but still, I am by no means sure, that the threat which has thus been held out, may not produce some beneficial effects in the Common Rooms and Bursaries of the different Colleges.

Ever affectionately yours,
Ch. W. W. W.

MR. W. H. FREMANTLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Englefield Green, Thursday morning.

My Dear Lord,

I hear from all quarters of changes and of approaches made to you. I don't believe one word of it; though, if it is true that Lord Harrowby is going to Paris, it would not be unlikely that you were offered the Presidentship. Bulkeley came from town yesterday, and says it is full of the report of the junction of the Grenvilles. He met your uncle Tom, who was violently indignant upon it, which I own I am sorry for, as, not meaning even to take office himself, I see no reason why he should stifle all approach to it in his family altogether; however, I think it will be so, and thus things will go on just as they are. The Duke of Wellington and Lord Castlereagh are expected about the 14th, the latter first. Of course, all this report has arisen from your attendance at the funeral, and Lord Grenville with the Address. He was sent for to the Closet immediately on his arrival at Carlton House.

Ever most truly yours,
W. H. Fremantle.

MR. W. H. FREMANTLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Englefield Green, November 24, 1818.

My dear Lord,

I perfectly agree with you in thinking the Government have the ball at their feet, and need no aid to carry on whatever they think necessary. The death of Romilly has been a great thing for them, and the violence of the Opposition and folly of the O'Meara business, strengthens them in every way.

It was said Sir Robert Wilson was implicated with G* * * *, and of course, *if* Sir Robert, *he* had communicated with Lord Grey; however, this is all insinuation and party trick, to lower their opponents, and it has its effect. The Prince Regent has altered his intention (*unusual with him*), and the funeral is now to be more private. I take it for granted you will not be summoned. I see Scarlett comes in for Peterborough; it is thought Hobhouse will get Westminster, as there are no friends for Maxwell. It was a mortifying thing to the Russells to have Hobhouse preferred. The Whigs had planned everything in favour of Lord J. Russell.

Castlereagh is expected home every day. The Duke of Wellington was to leave Aix-la-Chapelle yesterday for Paris, where he was to stay a week, and then come home. He has written to get a hunting-box in Lincolnshire or Leicestershire, which don't look like office. He is Field-Marshal of Austria, Russia and Prussia, so that, let who will fight in future, he may be employed if he likes.

The four young Princesses share the diamonds, which is a great disappointment to the Princes, particularly Clarence, who fully expected something. Shall you come to the meeting? I suppose not. Pray let me know if you have any meeting first at Dropmore, as I will come to you. I think your decided line of neutrality is obvious, but it should be fully agreed to by all your friends; for if Charles Wynn is looking to all the speeches he ever made on violent subjects in order to maintain consistency, you must be involved past hope with the Opposition. Whatever I pick up, between this and the meeting, you shall hear.

I think you should have your name written for inquiry, at Carlton House.

Ever most truly yours,
W. H. FREMANTLE.

P.S. Of course, if any order brings you to the funeral, you will make this your head-quarters.

References to two celebrated men of very different characters, will be found in Mr. Grenville's next note—"The Dutchman and the Poet." The former, a statesman, is not likely to be forgotten—the latter has only recently passed from amongst us. From what follows, it is evident that report had not done with Lord Grenville, though he had so often insisted that he had done with office.

RIGHT HONOURABLE THOMAS GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Cleveland Square, December 5, 1818.

MY DEAR LORD BUCKINGHAM,

I have now upon my table your letter from *Avington*, of 26th November, on which are these words. *"I shall move from hence on the 10th of next month. When will you come to Stowe?"* I concluded by this, that if I gave you a week's law, for settling yourself at Stowe, the 17th would be likely to suit you, and I arranged to meet Rogers and Fagel at Dropmore, on the 15th, to go with them to Stowe on the 17th, which would enable me to keep my promise of being at Althorp the 24th. I will write to Fagel and Rogers, to tell them that our proposed project is not feasible, and will endeavour to make my Stowe visit on my return from Althorp. How far this will suit the Dutchman and the Poet, I will endeavour to learn; but I know nothing of their future destinations. Fagel had meant to stay with you from 17th to 21st, and Rogers was to have gone on with me, the 24th, to Althorp. Perhaps in the hurry of writing, you may have intended to write the 20th, but the only *very clear* word in your letter, is your moving from Avington on the 10th, which followed by your asking, "when I came to Stowe," made me conclude you would be there on the 10th.

Reports increase of D. W. [Duke of Wellington] succeeding Mulgrave in the Ordnance, and it is true that Lady Liverpool's foreign carriage to take her to the south of France, is all but ready; this has set the politicians a speculating, and they conclude that the husband will follow the wife, which I believe is as much without foundation, as another report of Lord Grenville being to succeed him. I believe there is no idea of Lord Liverpool quitting or going abroad.

Grenfell told me that all the respectable part of the Opposition are so indignant at Burdett setting up Hobhouse, that they will vote for Maxwell, if no other candidate is set up. Was there ever anything so degrading as suggesting the name of Lord J. Russell to the discussion of Burdett, Hunt, Bruce, and Kinnaird!! This is the greatest indignity that I ever recollect to one of the first Whig families in the country. Love to dear Lady Buckingham.

RIGHT HONOURABLE THOMAS GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Cleveland Square, December 7, 1818.

My dear Lord Buckingham,

The Duke of York has gone a begging to Vansittart, and there is some idea of favouring this request, by reforming altogether the present Windsor establishment, and giving the Duke of York £20,000 per annum, to keep the King, and to have the sole custody of his person. I think he ought to have the custody of the person, and I should be not averse to any proper mode in which this custody might furnish some advantage to the Duke; but I think, with the little prudence and management which the Duke has shown in his own concerns, the country will not, and perhaps ought not, to see the old King quartered upon the Duke's discretion; whatever belongs fitly to the maintenance of the King, should be exclusively appropriated to his use, and I have no doubt that, upon farther discussion among themselves, the Ministers must see this project of Vansittart's as untenable. W.[1] will be of use if he is steadily with you, but disappointment has, I am told, made him captious and factious.

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[1] Charles Williams Wynn.

CHAPTER XIV.

[1819.]

INDISCREET LANGUAGE AND CONDUCT OF CERTAIN POLITICIANS—OPENING OF THE NEW PARLIAMENT—SPEECH OF THE PRINCE REGENT—ALLEGED WEAKNESS OF THE ADMINISTRATION—IMPROVED POSITION OF THE THIRD PARTY—COMMITTEE ON THE WINDSOR ESTABLISHMENT—DUKE OF WELLINGTON'S OPINION OF LORD GRENVILLE—ALLOWANCE TO THE DUKE OF YORK FOR TAKING CARE OF THE KING.

CHAPTER XIV.

THIS year was one of deep trouble and alarm to the loyal and well-disposed, and was long remembered for the tumults with which it was disgraced.

The measures which Government had adopted to put down sedition, did not effect more than checking its demonstrations for a time. There was a dangerous spirit spreading through the more populous districts, fostered by the arts of unprincipled demagogues, and to some extent encouraged by the indiscreet language and conduct of certain leaders of the Opposition, who appeared desirous of securing popularity to themselves at any cost to the county. The Government do not appear to have acted with sufficient vigour and decision, which created an impression of weakness, in that select band of moderate Whigs, which had for some time been watching events in an attitude of expectation.

Under these circumstances, the new Parliament were summoned to meet on the 14th of January; but the Royal Speech was not read till the 21st. After having referred to the continued indisposition of the King, and the Queen's demise, it announced that the negociations which had taken place at Aix-la-Chapelle, had led to the evacuation of the French territory by the Allies, and that the Convention on this subject, as well as a Treaty lately concluded with the United States of America, should be laid before Parliament. Then came references to the estimates, to reductions that had been effected in the Naval and Military Establishments, and to the decided improvement in the revenue. The speech ended with a paragraph describing the war that had lately been carried on against the Mahratta Princes by the Marquis of Hastings. Very little comment was made in either House on the Speech or on the Address; the latter being agreed to without Opposition.

Subjects of interest, however, soon came on for discussion—among the earliest, were a proposition for continuing the Bank Restriction Act, and another for placing the custody of the King's person in the Duke of York. The former commenced with a secret committee of enquiry in both Houses, the latter may also be said to have commenced in the same manner, after a message from the Prince Regent, announcing considerable reductions in the distribution of the Civil List revenue. Before either question came to be debated, the following note was written:

MARQUIS WELLESLEY TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Wentworths, near Egham, Januury 28, 1819. Thursday.

MY DEAR LORD,

I am very much concerned to learn from your note, that you have been detained at Stowe by the gout; and I shall be anxious to hear of your complete recovery. Your Lordship will perceive that nothing of any moment occurred in the House of Lords. I went to town and attended on the first day; and I propose to attend again, when the Windsor establishment shall be discussed, or when any other question of importance may arise. I understand, however, that no business is expected in the House of Lords at present. Your Lordship will have observed the symptoms of agitation which have appeared in the other House. I am informed, that they have already occasioned alarm, and that they are likely to produce serious consequences.

I returned to this place, where I have recovered from rheumatics very successfully; I shall remain here for some days.

Believe me always, my dear Lord, with the greatest esteem and regard, yours most faithfully,

WELLESLEY.

In reading the following communications, and indeed many from the same source, allowance should be made by the reader, for a sanguine temperament acting upon a mind desirous of high employment. It is probable that the Administration was not so weak as here represented, though a want of decision may sometimes have made itself manifest in its proceedings. The Minister had suggested that the Duke of York should have the custody of the King's person with an additional allowance. This was open to grave objections, of which some members of Opposition immediately availed themselves—the idea of bestowing a large annual sum, on a son for looking after an afflicted parent, shocked many worthy people, among whom were to be found, certain members of what may be said to have represented the Grenville interest in the House of Commons.

MR. W. H. FREMANTLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Stanhope Street, February 9, 1819.

MY DEAR LORD,

You will see the division of last night, which is a tremendous one against Ministers, and the speech of Tierney's which was incomparable to throw down all Castlereagh's flattering finance statements.

I considered the question of Brougham,[1] to be so thoroughly party, and not having the most favourable opinion of his conduct in a committee, notwithstanding his acknowledged and known abilities, that I did not vote at all upon it; Lord Temple thought the same, and we came away together, and Bernard told me he should do the same. *I* think the *Committee* as it is now formed fully adequate to overturn Vansittart, which I have no doubt it will do. The impression of the weakness of Government increases daily, and the unity and strength of the Opposition of course improves. As yet, they have all kept within due bounds, but this cannot last. Macdonald told me a day or two ago, (and seemed to volunteer the discussion), that they now only wished for union between the Lansdownes and Grenvilles; for though the Opposition was at present so united, it could not be expected that "the mountain" could continue so subservient and orderly. I agreed in the wish, and said it would be most advantageous, but knowing, as he did, the impracticability of this class of the Opposition, and the insurmountable difficulties arising from questions on Reform of Parliament, on which, it appears, the Lansdownes were to a certain extent committed, such an union could only cordially take place, by a separation from the Burdettites. I only mention this to shew, that though they are now going on so smooth, *they* do not expect it to last.

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[1] Mr. Calcraft's motion on February 8th, to add Mr. Brougham's name to the Committee for investigating the affairs of the Bank, negatived by 175 to 153.

I am quite sure *we* are in the best of all positions, having no connection with either party, being avowedly hostile to the Reformers, and ready to throw our weight where and when you please; and our weight certainly increases. I have no doubt we shall have the Marlborough party. I own, I should have preferred Wynn's not supporting Brougham's question last night, considering it *Party*, and nothing but *Party*. However, perhaps you may think otherwise. You will observe that Government was so completely paralyzed, that they dare do nothing; and it becomes a Government of Committees of the House of Commons. Lord Grenville is in very high force, but violent on the question of Bullion; he thinks they are overwhelming the subject by papers in the Committee, and by examining much too extensively—this, of course, was the object of the Ministers, and no repeal will take place till towards the end of the Session.

I am going down to day to attend James Stanhope's ballot; they will not of course leave me on. I will keep this open till I go to the House of Commons.

There is nothing new to tell you. Stanhope's Committee is formed, but the selection not yet returned. The division of last night makes a great noise. Woodhouse, of Norfolk; Davenport, Cheshire, and many others of this description among them. I hear Sir L. de Crespigny, and Mr. Buxton place themselves in our squad. Frankland Lewis went away, I hear.

Adieu, ever &c.,

W. H. F.

MR. CHARLES WILLIAMS WYNN TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

House of Commons, February 9, 1819.

MY DEAR BUCKINGHAM.

It is difficult to describe to you the daily increasing appearances of weakness in the Government, which are such, as if I had not seen all I have seen during some years past, would make me think it quite impossible that they should go on for a month. They evidently have no hold on the House, either to procure the attendance of their friends, or to keep the country gentlemen with them. You will see the report of last night's division, in which Davenport, Woodhouse, Lister, and other Government men voted against them. Had the question related to any man less personally unpopular than Brougham, they would have been clearly beaten. In the Committee on the Windsor Establishment this morning, they were beaten on the number of Equerries to be retained about the King, and would have been so a second time had it not been for the vote of Morpeth and myself. They afterwards gave way upon the list of the Queen's servants, who were proposed to retain their salaries, giving up Lord Morton, Lord Harcourt, the Equerries, the Doctors, &c. &c., to the amount of £7,000 a year. What will be done about the Duke of York, I do not know; there seems a general dislike of the grant of £10,000 a year to him, but there is also an unwillingness to be forward in opposing it. Lord Grenville is very strong against the principle of a grant as a compensation to a son for the care of his father. A curious circumstance came out incidentally this morning, that the Queen's house, in St. James's Park, had been completely new furnished out of the sum granted for the Windsor Establishment.

I am very glad to hear from Temple, that you are so much recovered, and that you are coming up in the course of a fortnight, when we shall have an opportunity of talking over the general state of things.

The first way of strengthening themselves, which they will probably try, will be to substitute Peel for Vansittart, and Canning for the Doctor; but I doubt much, whether this can be sufficient.

I am still *en garçon* at Whitehall, but hope to have my wife and children up in the course of next week.

Peel, who is the chairman of the Bank Committee, professes, I find, to have as yet, formed no opinion on the subject, but to be *open to conviction;* and the same is the language of the Duke of Wellington.

Ever affectionately yours,
CH. W. W. W.

MR. W. H. FREMANTLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Stanhope Street, Saturday, 11 o'clock.

MY DEAR LORD,

Your son and Charles Wynn feel exactly as you do with respect to what is going forward. The question of Bank issue must now resolve itself into that of a secret or open Committee, and it will be impossible to resist their power, if they put upon it such names as are unobjectionable, and more particularly as Lord Grenville has agreed to belong to the one named in the House of Lords. As to arguing that the measures of the Bank, preparatory to issuing coin, and as to its means and resources being open to everybody who choose to go into the Committee-room, I think it can hardly be maintained. I perfectly agree with you (and so does everybody) that the whole is a trick of Government; but, at the same time, the measure of cash payments would not be resorted to, without a Committee of Inquiry previous thereto, and this is the public feeling, and the feeling of the House of Commons. The direct question must come after their Report.

The state of public opinion of the inefficiency of the Government still continues, and everybody believes that Castlereagh's illness is not the real cause of his deferring business.

I dined with the Duke of Wellington a day or two ago, who *I* think seemed extremely pensive and low. He asked particularly after you when you came to town; told me he thought Lord Grenville was the only man who saw in its proper light the question of cash payments (this, I think, is curious from a member of the Cabinet); asked me also if Lord Temple fully coincided with you in political opinions, to which I answered, most fully and completely in everything.

The question of the Windsor Establishment will not, I think, be of much importance to the House. The reduction is very great. The Lansdownes were in high spirits, if I am to judge by Macdonald. Lord Grenville comes on Thursday morning to be on the Committee, which he means strictly to attend. I hope you are better.

Ever most truly,
W. H. F.

The opinion expressed by the Duke of Wellington of Lord Grenville was alike honourable to both.

Signs of division in the camp now became apparent, on what appears to have been a party question, but it is sufficiently explained in the first note from Mr. Fremantle; the second, fully illustrates the question respecting the Duke of York, upon which they were equally divided.

MR. W. H. FREMANTLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Stanhope Street, February 12, 1819.

MY DEAR LORD,

I am very glad to find you approved of our vote on the question of Brougham's nomination to the Committee. The more I have considered it, the more convinced I am we were right in considering it as a *Party* question, even though we had not been influenced by the character of the individual as a member of a Committee. My own idea on these subjects (and in this I am sure I agree with you), is at all times to abstain from voting. It was a trial of strength, to prove support to Brougham, and in this, if I had been compelled to vote, I should certainly have voted against him. Frankland Lewis felt as I did, and was surprised at Wynn's eagerness. I have not spoken to Phillimore, because I fear he might be offended with me, and think I wished to interfere with his support of Wynn, and as you have written to him and to Wynn, it is better that I should not touch upon it. I have every wish to follow Wynn, and did, at the beginning of our neutral line, express to him my opinion of so doing; but when I see it obviously breaks in upon that line, without touching the general principle on which we politically act, I am convinced I consult your interests best, and, I am sure, follow my own inclinations better, by abstaining from voting; and, indeed, sooner than fall again into the support of the Opposition as it is now composed, I would rather surrender my seat. I should hope that the line of acting which I have described, is what Lord Grenville would approve, because it is certainly the line he adopts himself. He never speaks or votes, but upon questions which touch the general principles on which his political conduct rests. I don't think this is worth saying more about, nor should I have said thus much, if you had not mentioned to me that you had written to Wynn upon it, and perhaps he may have made it the subject of discussion.

I will take an opportunity of saying what you mention, the first opportunity I have to Macdonald.

Ever most truly yours,
W. H. F.

MR. W. H. FREMANTLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Stanhope Street, February 16, 1819.

MY DEAR LORD,

The question regarding the Duke of York will turn on the point of whether it shall be taken from the Privy Purse, or be charged as it was for the Queen. This is certainly the minor question, and I view it, as you do, that, having the precedent of the Queen, there seems no reason for altering this mode. At the same time, I think something may arise in the discussion to make one consider this point. There is, in fact, the greatest difficulty in charging it to the Privy Purse, for by an Act of the 39th and 40th of the King, it is made distinctly private property; and what does the *Privy Purse* mean, but a full and absolute uncontrollable power over it? If you leave the King his Privy Purse, you leave him the full enjoyment of it; but it is said that you have, subsequently to his illness, applied it for the payment of doctors and charities. This is undoubtedly true; but it appears, in the Committee, that the whole of it is now employed, and therefore, without encroaching and altering the applications, you cannot charge the £10,000 to the Custos upon it. Indeed, I am led to believe the Duke of York will not take it from this fund. However, as you will observe, this is a minor question; the main one is the allowance, and for this, you may rely upon it, I shall vote, and urge all your party to do the same.

I was at Lord Grenville's last night, and had a good deal of conversation with —— upon it. He is evidently against the grant at all—says it is an infamous and disgraceful transaction, and will ruin the Duke of York in public opinion. I did not give way to him in this, but stated the precedent of the Queen, which he really could not get over, but only said that *that* grant was highly improper, and, consequently, this worse; also, in all private concerns of this nature, the Court of Chancery always granted to the Committee a larger sum than was necessary to maintain the lunatic. This he denied. I then quoted Gamon and others, and his reply was, that it was infamous in any individual charged with the care of a lunatic, not to expend the whole allowance upon him.

I then said that every man in the House, Tierney as well as the Government, agreed to the proposition of granting the allowance to the Duke of York, and the former even was willing to increase it, as he stated on the first night of the discussion. He then replied, that the Opposition was not to be followed on this; that Tierney did it to court the Duke of York. Why then, I could not but observe, were we alone to stand the brunt of refusing this allowance, and court the resentment of the whole Royal Family, and not have with us the feeling, or opinion, or support of the public, who did not object to this grant.*

He launched out into violent abuse of the Government, of its imbecility, folly, &c. I ventured to say, in admitting all this:

"Do you prefer the Opposition, as it is now composed, to this disgraceful and feeble Government?"

"No, it is worse."

"Why, then, you have a choice of two evils, and you admit the one to be greater than the other."

"Yes, and therefore we must maintain our neutrality."

"Admitted; but that neutrality, if not properly guarded, becomes decided Opposition, and the country cannot be benefited by it."

This was the purport of our conversation; but really, as to taking the ground of opposing the grant to the Duke of York, I think there is no one motive or sense in doing it. All you say about Charles Wynn is perfectly just and fair. As to his conducting a fair and candid neutrality, he is incapable of doing it; he is much too inclined to the Opposition; he is constantly at Brooke's in the morning, and has no disposition to wean himself from there. For one, I lament this, because, if he had the same disposition and leaning on the other side, I am sure the result would be better. As to the idea of the Government breaking up, or there being the least intention of a change, be assured it is no such thing; they have as little idea of going out now, as they had twelve months since, and even if Vansittart were driven out, it would merely be the exchange of one Minister for another. I doubt, however, their driving Vansittart out. As you say, whenever a question comes of vital importance to them, you will see the country gentlemen come forward, to prevent the Opposition coming in.

The Opposition are quite delighted at having, at length, broken with Burdett, and in this I think they are lucky. Everybody imagines Lamb[1] will succeed, and I suppose he will.

On Saturday, a question of great importance was carried against Stanhope in the Towns-Committee; it was to establish the eligibility of voting in seventy-nine persons who had been rejected at the poll. Yesterday, however, two divisions were made (one by a casting vote of the Chairman, Lord Althorpe), which would destroy the qualification of many of these persons. I saw Stanhope afterwards, who held a language of confidence; but *in the House*, the opinions are against him, and I don't think his Committee good.

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[1] He was returned for Westminster.

I shall go and stand a shot to-day from Penrhyn, which I hear will be very short, in turning out that invaluable Senator, Swann. Adieu.

Ever, my dear Lord,
Most truly yours,
W. H. F.

P.S. I shall keep this open for the House of Commons.

Nothing new. I have had a long conversation with Lord T., who is quite decided on the main question of the Duke of York. He is named for the Penrhyn Ballot, but whether he will be left on, I can't say—should rather think he would. Lamb has gained to-day. Hobhouse 119 a-head on the gross pole.

CHAPTER XV.

[1819].

GOVERNMENT PROPOSALS FOR THE WINDSOR ESTABLISHMENT — MR. TIERNEY'S MOTION—OBJECTIONS TO ALLOWING THE DUKE OF YORK £10,000 A YEAR FOR TAKING CARE OF THE KING—MR. CHARLES WILLIAMS WYNN'S INCREASED INFLUENCE IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS—POSITION OF MINISTERS AND OPPOSITION — IMPORTANT DEBATE ON THE PROPOSED ALLOWANCE TO THE DUKE OF YORK.

CHAPTER XV.

THE House of Commons went into a Select Committee on the Windsor Establishment, on the 23rd of February, when Lord Castlereagh proposed three resolutions—Firstly, that for this establishment generally, instead of £100,000, £50,000 be appropriated. Secondly, that annuities be given to the servants of her late Majesty, to the amount recommended by the Committee. Thirdly, that £10,000 be given to the Duke of York, as to her late Majesty, for the expenses attending the care of his Majesty's person. On his proposing the first, Mr. Tierney, in a declamatory speech, moved an amendment, "that the surplus out of the funds arising to his Majesty, from the Duchy of Lancaster, and the £60,000, which was allowed for the Privy Purse, after the payment of the physicians, and other incidental expenses, be applied to the payment of the £10,000, to be given to his Royal Highness the Duke of York, as the Custos of his Majesty's person." After a long debate the original motion was carried by 218 to 186.

The subject will be found fully illustrated by the following communications.

MR. CHARLES WILLIAMS WYNN TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Saturday.

MY DEAR B.,

I learnt last night, in the House of Commons, that Tierney's first motion is to be, that any surplus of the Privy Purse, after defraying the different charges placed upon it by Parliament, should be applied to the salary of the Custos. This will, I think, meet your opinion, and is preferable to a direct motion for charging the whole salary on the Privy Purse, as that includes the two points of the amount of salary, and of the fund from which it shall proceed, which are two very distinct questions, the first of which would, in the opinion of many, depend on the decision of the second. For my own part, I still think it much to be deplored that anything at all is to be taken, and that so unfavourable a contrast should be made in the public eye between the Duke and the Counsellors, who, undertaking not only to attend monthly meetings, but also to reside five or six weeks each in the year, have no allowance whatever; but, if circumstances render it impossible that he should discharge this duty gratis, I think the allowance ought to bear some reference to the probable expense, and not be taken from that given to the Queen on completely different grounds. On reference to the debates of 1812, you will see Perceval expressly states as his reason for proposing it, the different mode of life the Queen was to adopt, and refers to her occasional residence and keeping a Court at Buckingham House.

The division of Thursday night was again very strong against Government, and the more so, as owing to Westminster Election, and other circumstances, the old Opposition made no muster whatever, but had allowed Macdonald, Duncannon, and most of their active men to be absent and to attend to the canvass. They did not intend to divide; but the great number of independents who took an active part in favour of the motion, encouraged them so to do. Among many others in the minority, I was most surprised to see the elder Vernon and Wilmot, being their first appearance.

I made the communication you desired to William Lamb, who expressed himself much flattered, &c., as I told him you had not waited for an application to do all in your power to support a brother of his, &c., &c.

The striking *feature*—to use a Castlereaghism—of the day, is the unwillingness of most of the new members to be considered as belonging to Government, to receive notes or answer whip. Holmes and Lushington watched the door most assiduously the whole of Thursday evening, unchecked by any opposite door-keeper, but could not prevent many of those whom I should have put down as steady Ministerial voters, from going away.

Ever affectionately yours,
Ch. W. W. W.

DR. PHILLIMORE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Doctors' Commons, February 22, 1819.

My dear Lord,

Unfortunately, I was detained at my chambers so late on Saturday, that I did not return to Whitehall (where my letters are always left) till the post was gone out, and, consequently, not till it was too late to answer your Lordship's letters. This I exceedingly lament on every ground. Indeed, I would give a great deal at this moment, to be able to converse with you on the subject of the notice which is to be brought forward in the House of Commons this evening.

I certainly see many objections to charging £10,000 per annum to the Duke of York on the Privy Purse; and it is likewise, I think, an insuperable obstacle to such a measure, that it is avowedly galling to the feelings of the Duke.

This, your Lordship will recollect, was the sole point to which the reasoning in your letter was addressed; but, according to my expectation, the question principally to be discussed will be that which you seem to think settled, viz., the propriety of making the Duke any allowance for the care he is to have of his father.

With respect to this, when the first rumour of this proposition was stirred, I had an opportunity of hearing Lord Grenville's opinion as to the impolicy and impropriety of such a measure. I have discussed the subject with him since I found his opinion unchanged. You know the respect—I might almost say, the veneration—with which I receive any opinion that falls from him; and I am free to confess that I have strongly imbibed his sentiments on this subject. Indeed, I have not yet heard any one reason for such a grant to the Duke of York, except some supposed analogy with the situation of the Queen, when she had the care of the King's person; but I have not been able to ascertain in what the analogy consists.

Lord Grenville, to whom the whole circumstances of that grant are, of course, familiar, said it was granted under the peculiar circumstances of the Queen's situation—circumstances which, in one respect, apply to the situation of the Duke of York. And then, there is something very revolting (and I am fearful this will be strongly felt by the country) in paying a son £10,000 per annum, to superintend the condition of his father, that father being the Sovereign of the country. The Ministry said, in the House of Commons, it was to defray the expenses of his journeys. But why are the son's journeys to be defrayed, more than those of the Duke's Council, the Bishop of London, Lord St. Helens, &c.? and again, can £10,000 a year be expended on journeys between Oatlands, or London and Windsor?

I fear, from the tenor of your Lordship's letter, that you entertain a different opinion as to the propriety of this allowance—against that opinion (if the question should be so shaped as to bring that exact point to issue), I cannot vote; for I most unaffectedly assure you, that it is painful to me not to have had an opportunity of discussing the point with you; and it is a subject on which I should be very glad to be convinced that my impressions (founded as they are as Lord Grenville's opinions) are erroneous.

I hope to find Lord Temple, about four o'clock. I could not find him at home yesterday; and this morning he is shut up with an Election Committee.

Tierney has lost ground with the country gentlemen, exceedingly, by his conduct when Lord Castlereagh first submitted this proposition to the House. He was thought to have courted the Duke of York more than he would have done under other circumstances, and if the Opposition had not been so strong as to give them a hope of office.

The Government are, undoubtedly very weak, and lamentably deficient in energy. I really think, if the Opposition conduct their attacks with as much prudence as they have hitherto done, that the Ministers will be compelled, at last, before the Session is over, to make some change in their front.

You will have heard, from other quarters, what a respectable appearance our bench has assumed. Indeed, Charles Wynn seems now the person *most looked up to* by the House, and has not, I think, voted without having his opinion backed by at least twenty votes.

It is very difficult to form any conjecture as to the result of to-night's discussion, for the question can hardly be considered as a political one: and the people will, I think, be considerably influenced by the course which the debate may assume; and this it is impossible to anticipate.

Pray excuse haste, and believe me,

Your Lordship's obliged and faithful servant,

JOSEPH PHILLIMORE.

MR. W. H. FREMANTLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Stanhope Street, Tuesday, July 23, 1819.

MY DEAR LORD,

There was an admirable debate yesterday; I think one of the best, on both sides, I remember to have heard; Castlereagh the worst,[1] but Peel admirable, and Scarlett as good; I think he made one of the most ingenious speeches I ever heard. You will see what a bad division it was for the Government, at least, I think so. The greatest possible exertion was made on both sides; and, notwithstanding everything was brought that could be brought, their numbers only amounted to two hundred and eighty-one, and this on a question which certainly was rather favourable to them. Tierney, artfully enough, framed his motion so as not to distress the personal friends of the Duke of York; it was to apply the residue of the Privy Purse, as it was reasonable, in defraying the expenses of his Majesty's establishment at Windsor. I don't give you the exact words, but the word *reasonable* was a quotation from the act of 1812, which applied a part of this fund for the payment of the physicians.

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[1] Lord Castlereagh, like the Duke of Wellington, made no pretension to eloquence. Nevertheless, they both wrote and spoke with great effect.

The whole question, of course, was argued upon the distinction taken between a public servant, as the Duke of York was stated to me, and the physicians, who had always been paid by the King; and, therefore, such an application of the Privy Purse to them, was no infringement on its private rights. Of course, the Lawyers agreed technically in the construction of the acts; and Peel took the largest ground of its recognition on a variety of occasions since the accession, and concluded by a most impressive address to the feelings of the House. I really should be puzzled to say on which side the argument was best sustained, but I think on the side of Government.

I was in hopes of persuading Wynn not to vote, but to go away; and I thought I had once succeeded, but it ended in his voting in the minority. I prevented his speaking, by urging the great injury it would occasion to your party, by his taking so decided a line, and not being supported by your members; and I added, that I should feel compelled to speak myself, in order to explain the grounds of our difference; indeed, I was prepared to do so, and at any rate, should have spoken, and wished to do so, if Wynn had not made up his mind to vote for the amendment; but such being the case, I thought it better, altogether, not to speak, as less observation would then be made of our difference. Lord Temple, Nugent, and Scrope Bernard, were there, and the former quite satisfied with the determination he had made.

The battle will now be continued from day to day, on the main question; and as the bill for granting the £10,000 will offer so many opportunities, I am afraid we shall have a very unpleasant scene of it. I perfectly accord in your opinion; and Lord T * * * feels quite warm on the point of supporting the allowance to the Duke. I am afraid Wynn does not, and, in truth, I fear Lord Grenville also objects to it; but I really cannot see the difference of the situation of the late Queen and the Duke of York; and I have argued this point with both of them, without hearing one word to alter my opinion. Wynn quotes Perceval's speech, which puts the Queen's allowance on the footing of extra expenses to be incurred by her travelling, and not having the advantages which she enjoyed by always attending the King; but after all, this was only arguing that extra expenses, charges, and responsibility were imposed on the Queen, which is also the case with the Duke; and I cannot see why, or on what ground you can depart from the principle which was then laid down. The Queen, in fact, had much greater advantages than the Duke will have; she had the enjoyment of £100,000, instead of £50,000 now allotted to Windsor; she was also relieved by the Privy Purse of £10,000 per annum, paid before 1812, by her to the Princesses, &c. &c.; so that, in fact, she got £20,000 per annum. But after all, I cannot see the *policy* of objecting to it. The grant is so far from unpopular, that I verily believe the country approves it; and why, and for what purpose are you and your friends to make themselves personally obnoxious to the Royal family, by fighting a personal question of this nature?—but, however, sure I am that Wynn will do so. This, of course, I only mention to you, as between ourselves. I always feel delicacy in speaking on this subject, because truly and sincerely I am desirous of following Wynn; but if we only change places, to pursue uniform Opposition, there is an end of your neutrality, and of your objects, be they what they may.

I believe Frankland Lewis, and Knox went away; I did not see them in the division, but am not sure.

Ever truly yours,
W. H. F.

Burdett will bring in Hobhouse. I am afraid this is certain. I heard, yesterday, that Towey was likely to be decided by a casting vote. They are afraid treating will be proved at Chester. The virtuous Swann is likely to go to Newgate. The Duke of York's message, I think, was considered injudicious.

MR. CHARLES WILLIAMS WYNN TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Whitehall, Tuesday.

MY DEAR B.,

With the exception of Lord Castlereagh, who spoke in his very worst and most perplexed style, the debate last night was unusually good. Tierney, the Solicitor-General, and Scarlett, excellent. Peel, eloquent, and productive of great effect, but laying himself extremely open on many points, some of which Scarlett hit, but missed others at least equally vulnerable. The Duke of York's anxious wish was to have avoided the question, by declining all salary; but General Grenville says, "the Regent compelled him to take it." And one of the Duke's most intimate friends, who came down to vote for him last night, told Phillimore, in confidence, that the answer to the Duke's request was, "So, sir! you want to be popular at our expense."

Had the question moved, been simply to have charged the Duke's allowance on the Privy Purse, I should have had no difficulty in voting against it, as, after his communication of his intention not to accept it, if proceeding from that fund, it seemed to me a very good reason for giving nothing, but none at all for passing a vote which you were beforehand informed would be nugatory. On the other hand, the resolution, that the surplus of the Privy Purse should be employed to the reasonable expenses of the care of the King's person, appeared to me only a recognition of that principle on which all private property is so applied, without any distinction as to the manner in which it used to be appropriated by the lunatic when sane. It is quite true, that it would have been most objectionable to have charged an allowance of £10,000 a year to the Duke upon it, at least in my view, since Parliament are bound to look as jealously, if not more so, to a charge on private property than to one on the public funds. If he is to have a *salary* as a public officer, it must come from the public; but if it is only to cover his expenses, I should say infinitely the best way would have been to have authorized the Keeper of the Privy Purse to pay to the Duke all such expenses as he should certify to have been incurred in the discharge of his duty, just as you know is frequently done on a special foreign mission for which no remuneration is required.

The Solicitor-General last night disclaimed all idea of assimilating the situation of the Duke to that of a committee of a lunatic, since in the latter case there was no instance of an allowance being granted, but the expenses only defrayed. The great applause Peel's speech met with must have been not a little grating to Castlereagh, if he compared it to the dead languor with which his own was received; and that effect cannot have been lessened by the manner in which the former disclaimed embarrassing himself with any vindication or defence of Ministers. I should have liked extremely to have followed him, but in consequence of the difference of your opinion, thought that it was better to give a silent vote. I regretted extremely so to do; but having been upon the Committee, and circumstanced as I am in the House, I did not think I could honourably go away. The reason why I did not previously discuss the matter with Temple, you will easily conceive, since you must know that, in my view, no advantage arising from union of friends could be worth the hazard of inducing him to give a vote (especially at this early part of his parliamentary career) in which you do not fully concur. He appears to me, in every conversation which we have yet had, to have exactly the feeling which is the surest presage of good, an extreme anxiety to do what is right, accompanied with a disposition to allow their full weight to the opinions of others.

The result of this division was to us individually most unsatisfactory, as Lord Temple, Fremantle, Sir G. Nugent, and Sir Scrope, voted for the original motion. Lord Blandford, Lord Charles, who had professed their anxiety to vote against it, but still to go with us, if possible, Serjeant Onslow, Dickenson, and I for the amendment—Lewis, Knox, and Phillimore, went away. I think the motion which you suggest may be a very proper one if—which I am not sure of—there is a sum out of those which, under different false pretences, have been voted to pay the Regent's debts and swell his Privy Purse, lately set at liberty; but I should not apprehend that it would answer your recommendation of it being less likely to annoy the said Regent. I was particularly glad to hear from Temple that there was a probability of your soon coming up, as I am quite sure that there are many of these questions which you and I might settle better in ten minutes' conversation than in a week's correspondence. The question to-night would be one of them, as I think we could easily compromise by proposing such a sum as, while it should liberally cover all expenses, would be free from the objections which apply to the proposal of Ministers, and would run a fair chance of being carried, in the present temper of the House.

What think you of Castlereagh's motion for a hodge-podge committee on Penal Laws, Prisons, Botany Bay, and Forgery? I am disposed to resist it on principle, as being (even if it were possible for a committee to go through it in reasonable time) highly objectionable, as giving too large and undefined a scope of enquiry, such as must enable the Committee to perpetuate itself from session to session, and an *excess* of one of the worst practices of modern times, that of appointing Select Committees, which, from the extent of their powers, become standing ones, and may be productive of the most dangerous consequences, by drawing to themselves questions which the House at large alone ought to entertain, and powers which it alone ought to exercise. I wrote on Friday to my mother, believing her to be at Stowe. Have you heard anything of her.

Ever most affectionately yours,
CH. W. W. W.

P. S. It is, I find, doubtful whether there will be any division to-night, and whether it will not be delayed till the Report.

MR. CHARLES WILLIAMS WYNN TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

MY DEAR B., Wednesday.

All that I have heard since I saw you, convinces me that the division of Monday has produced even more effect than I then thought probable.

Phillimore dined yesterday with William Courtenay, and found him full of the impossibility of Administration's standing. Peel's defection, and taking away with him all those over whom he had influence (even Martin of Galway) was much dwelt upon; and it was said that, now he had manifested his power, his ambition would never be easy till he and the Duke of Wellington had established an Anti-Catholic Administration, which could only be met by a general union of all those who supported that question. John King, who met me this morning, said that the general talk in the offices was, that there must be an immediate change.

Ever yours,
Ch. W. W. W.

MR. CHARLES WILLIAMS WYNN TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Whitehall, Thursday night.

My dear Buckingham,

Till I came up to town, I should entirely have concurred in your view of the extreme improbability of any change being effected, but since I have been here, the conduct which Ministers have adopted, and the undisguised contempt manifested for them on all sides, both in public and in private, have altered my opinion. I agree with you that it is not to be expected that the House will vote an address to remove them, or any measure to that extent; but I do think it very likely that there will be such an indisposition to support, and such a willingness to oppose them, that they may not be able to carry on the public business, either at Carlton House, or St. Stephen's. It is quite evident, if you look at the composition of the Committee on the Civil List, that Castlereagh appointed it with the intention of being out voted.

Castlereagh.
Vansittart.
Huskisson.
Long.
Vesey Fitzgerald, (in the Chair.)
Holford.
Solicitor-General.
Stewart Wortley.
Chaplin.
E. J. Littleton.
Admiral Sotheron, (late Frank.)
Blackburne.
Wilberforce.
Bankes.
Tierney.
Lord George Cavendish.
Lord Morpeth.
Lambe.
Brougham.
Sir A. Pigot.
C. W. W. Wynn.

Besides which, Holford said to one of them, when nominated, "We are to be beaten on this;" and Lyttleton, who is quite their jackall, was the first to propose reduction. Now, such a policy as this is too shallow to deceive anybody, and can only disgrace them with all sides. With respect to what you say about staying away, it may suit others, but will not do for me. The place I fill in the House of Commons has been gained by constant attendance and exertion only, and would be lost immediately, if they were discontinued; besides which, in the number of new members who hang as yet perfectly loose, there are some who look to me in a degree, and who, as they have at the time and since stated, gave their votes on the question of Brougham, entirely on my speech. My decision was not adopted, till I had talked over the subject with Lord Grenville, who was of opinion, that though Brougham's conduct was such, that one might not trust him on a Committee of Education, or indeed, any other, of which he would have the management, yet upon a question of this great importance, and restrained as he would be by so many other members who would not give way to him, his information, his astuteness and assiduity, might be of service.

The other day, in the Lords' Committee, Lauderdale asked the Governor of the Bank, as he attributed the necessity of the restriction to the unfavourable state of the Exchange, "what he should consider as a par of Exchange." The answer was, that he really had not considered, and it being out of his line of business, he did not know how to answer the question.

The Civil List Committee has not sate again since I last wrote to you. In addition to the difficulties and objections I have already mentioned to you respecting the Duke of York, I am strongly impressed with the impropriety of he, the son, requiring an allowance for his trouble, and the expenses of his post horses to Windsor, when you require from the ten members of the Council, not only a monthly visit, but also in rotation, the constant residence of one of them without any salary or allowance whatever.

I hear that the consternation in the City is very great, there having been five or six more failures to day. Their outcry against Vansittart increases daily, and is quite universal.

Friday.

We have again met in the Civil List Committee, but have done little or nothing, except to discover that neither the Privy Purse, nor the allowance of the Duke of York as Custos came within our reference. Ministers positively refuse to charge the latter on the former, on the ground that the Privy Purse is private property. This cannot be denied, but it is difficult to discover why the expense of the King's Committee should not be defrayed out of his property, as that of any individual. I most heartily wish that the Duke could be persuaded to move his whole establishment from Oatlands, to Windsor Great Lodge, to be there kept at the public expense, though it would probably cost much more than £10,000 salary, yet I think it would be a far less objectionable form of assisting him.

We have to day expressed an opinion of the propriety of continuing Lord Winchelsea at the head of the King's establishment, on the ground of the necessity of the *general residence* of a person of high rank near the King's person. Now we happen to know that Lord Winchelsea has never resided since the King's illness, but has only come down occasionally; but it is intended in this way to give him a hint for his future conduct. Lord Grenville tells me that they seem to be making considerable progress in the Lords' Bank Committee, and that from appearances, he does not think it improbable that the Government will, at least, to a considerable extent, give way upon the question, throw Vansittart overboard, and take effectual measures to compel the Bank at some future period next year to commence cash payments.

The division on Monday night is considered, I find, as the most alarming circumstance which has yet befallen the Government, on account of the number of friends and independents who turned against them, and of others who left the House to avoid voting. Still, it is quite clear that nothing direct can be done towards turning them out, when there is nobody to put in their place. Brougham is completely cast down, and quite silent, not only in the House, but as I am told, in company; and this is partly attributable to bad health, which is very visible in his appearance, and partly to the impression which his conduct has made.

CHAPTER XVI.

[1819.]

DIPLOMATIC SNUFF BOXES — ACCIDENT TO THE DUKE OF YORK — INCREASING POPULARITY OF THE PRINCE REGENT — HIS FIRST DRAWING-ROOM—CHRISTENING OF THE PRINCESS VICTORIA—VISIT OF THE DUKE OF GLOUCESTER TO CAMBRIDGE — REVOLUTIONARY ASSEMBLIES — OPINIONS OF THE MARQUIS WELLESLEY ON THE STATE OF THE COUNTRY — SEDITIOUS MONSTER MEETING IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD OF MANCHESTER — MISCHIEVOUS INFLUENCE OF ORATOR HUNT AND HIS RADICAL COADJUTORS.

CHAPTER XVI.

The discussion about to be referred too, took place on the 19th of March, when Mr. C. Hutchinson moved a resolution, that the sum of £22,500 15*s*. 1*d*., for presents to Foreign Ministers, was extravagant, and ought not to be again incurred. Lord Castlereagh assured the House that the utmost economy had been observed—the account for snuff-boxes, which formed a considerable item in those expenses, went over a period of two years and a half, and they were customarily given to Foreign Ministers on the interchange of treaties. Mr. C. Hutchinson's motion was negatived without a division.

MR. CHARLES WILLIAMS WYNN TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Saturday, March 20, 1819.

My dear B.

I left the House yesterday at six, to dine, but had previously observed that Lushington seemed rather in a fuss; and I thought that, as is now frequently the case, there was a majority of Opposition present. Notwithstanding this, the sagacious Van went into a Committee of Supply on the Miscellaneous Estimates, where the poor innocent was sadly bullied. The house more than once cleared for a division, when they allowed him to withdraw almost every vote he proposed on the promise of further explanation on a future day. If they had not been merciful to him, I understand that they might have negatived every vote, though he sent high and low for members.

Lord Ellenborough's[1] death will now give them a week's holidays to turn themselves round, and impress on their friends a necessity of better daily attendance.

Without it, the machine must really stop. I am told that they are much alarmed about the question of the Lords of the Admiralty; but I have little doubt that they will have a decent majority upon it, in consequence of our staying away, which, I am convinced, is on all accounts the course which best becomes us. Watkin comes up Tuesday, and I will not engage to keep him in order; but, whatever I can do, I will.

Ever affectionately yours,
Ch. W. W. W.

The Windsor establishment Bill went into committee in the House of Lords on the 30th of March, and passed.

The Duke of York had more than one narrow escape with his life, but on the 12th of April, his Royal Highness met with another accident, which appeared likely to be attended with serious consequences. While in attendance on the King at Windsor, he was opening a door in the castle, and as he was entering a room, one of his spurs caught the loop at the bottom of his pantaloons, which tripped him up, and in falling he broke the bone of his arm about three inches above the elbow. The fracture was soon set, and fortunately there was no worse result, than a short confinement and a bandaged arm.

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[1] He died on the 13th of December.

The levees of the Prince Regent had generally been well attended, but the first for the present season, held on the 18th of March, in the number and brilliance of the company threw its predecessors into the shade. In addition to the Royal Dukes, the Archduke Maximilian, the State Officers, and Cabinet Ministers, the assembly comprised, ten dukes, thirteen marquises, thirty-nine earls, twenty-nine viscounts, thirty-four lords, seventeen bishops, ten foreign ministers, two hundred and fifty naval and military officers, and about a hundred other gentlemen. There appeared to exist no room for doubt, that his Royal Highness was gaining favour with the higher classes of society—a result, in a great measure due to his courteous and winning demeanour, to all who came within the circle of his observation. There were, however, other causes to account for this increasing popularity. The Prince Regent as the Sovereign *de facto,* was exercising a beneficial influence in various directions, particularly in the cultivation of the Arts and Sciences. He was a liberal patron of the Arts of Design, and had commenced that important street reformation that has handed his name down to another generation, in one of the handsomest streets, and the most agreeable metropolitan park in Europe.

A more decided manifestation of this favour was exhibited, when his Royal Highness held his first drawing-room at Buckingham House, on the 17th of June. This was an innovation on established practice, as a Queen had hitherto presided on such occasions, but as the Prince Regent must either abandon all idea of receiving his female subjects, or summon the Princess of Wales to do the honours, the first appeared by far the most probable result, till his Royal Highness determined to take the labour upon himself, having discovered a precedent to sanction such a proceeding.[1] The first experiment of this novel drawing-room, was arranged to combine with it the celebration of the Prince's birthday. Every effort was made to mark the day with unusual rejoicing. The military made an effective display, the several Ministers gave grand dinners, the nobility and gentry appeared in unusual splendour. The Princes and Princesses thronged to take part in the ceremony—indeed, so crowded was the Court, that many of the highest Whig families, that had scrupulously kept away from Carlton House, were now among the most prominent members of the brilliant company that filled the grand saloon. The presentations were numerous—the experiment perfectly successful.

On the 24th of the same month, a ceremony of far more significance was beheld, by a smaller but equally distinguished audience. This was the Christening of the infant Princess, the daughter of the Duke and

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[1] George II., after the death of Queen Caroline, held drawing-rooms.

Duchess of Kent, in the grand saloon of Kensington Palace; in the presence of the Prince Regent, the Duke of York (as proxy for the Emperor Alexander of Russia, the godfather), the Princess Augusta, for the Queen Dowager of Wurtemberg, and the Duchess of Gloucester, for the Duchess Dowager of Coburg, the god-mothers. The Archbishop of Canterbury, assisted by the Bishop of London, officiated, and the infant received the names of Alexandrina Victoria, and is now Queen of Great Britain and Ireland.

Among the movements of the Court during the summer, must be classed the visit to Cambridge of the Duke of Gloucester (Chancellor of the University), with his Duchess (Princess Mary), and the Princess Sophia of Gloucester. His Royal Highness held a Levee on the 5th of July, after which he attended the Senate; and among the honorary degrees then conferred, was that of LL.D., on the Marquis of Buckingham, of Magdalen College. It was on this occasion, that Mr. Thomas Babington Macaulay, of Trinity, recited his English poem, "Pompeii," that had gained the Chancellor's medal. The royal party remained during four days of extraordinary university excitement, and then departed to pay a visit to Audley End, the seat of Lord Braybrooke, who had also received an honorary degree of LL.D.

During the summer, political agitation in the provinces had began to assume a menacing aspect. A public meeting was held at Stockport, and, to the astonishment of many persons, presided over by Sir Charles Wolseley, a baronet of the Francis Burdett species. Scarcely another person moving in respectable society was to be found among the unruly mob thus called together, with flags surmounted by the revotionary emblem, and bearing, as inscriptions, the names of those long popular delusions, Annual Parliaments, Universal Suffrage, and Vote by Ballot. The usual noisy orators delivered the usual exciting speeches; and then the meeting, after passing a series of violent resolutions, dissolved, without attempting more serious mischief.

So deeply were mischievous principles now grafted on the minds of the people, that, in the neighbourhood of Manchester, a society was established, that issued circulars to other manufacturing districts, inviting the mechanics to co-operate in seeking redress for supposed grievances, and to assist in instilling "into the minds of their children, a deep and rooted hatred to the Government, and Houses of Parliament." This, however, is to be regarded as only a kind of echo to the popular appeals that had been often made from the Opposition benches in the House of Commons. It is but fair and reasonable, that they who sowed the storm should reap the whirlwind; but it was rather hard that two branches of the Legislature should be condemned to the hereditary hatred of a people, because a few firebrands among them chose to scatter sparks broadcast over the most combustible portion of society.

The state of public opinion in the manufacturing districts, was getting daily more threatening; and, in consequence of the want of vigour exhibited by the Home Secretary, Lord Sidmouth, an impression was gaining ground, of the weakness of Government, and of the imperative necessity of their obtaining an accession of strength. On these points, a correspondence had been carried on between the Marquis of Buckingham and the Marquis Wellesley, of which we can only print the following reply.

MARQUIS WELLESLEY TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Richmond, August 10, 1819. Tuesday.

MY DEAR LORD,

I return you many thanks for your kind letter; and I should certainly have availed myself of your obliging invitation to Stowe, but I am compelled to remain here, for the purpose of concluding some legal business, which must detain me far beyond the period of your continuance at Stowe.

Since my last letter to your Lordship, I have had no opportunities of further communication. I apprehend that the Ministers might not receive a direct proposal of increasing their strength (founded, as it must be, on an imputation of weakness), without jealousy and alarm. Nor am I yet satisfied, that they are prepared for any extensive improvement of their frame or system. But I wished to be apprised correctly of your Lordship's views, in order to enable me to lay the foundation of any proceeding which you might deem advisable, if a favourable opportunity should occur.

In the present state of this country, it appears to me to be my primary duty to use every exertion, by which I can hope to contribute towards the preservation of those objects, which are now so openly and powerfully attacked. These are, in truth, the entire foundation and superstructure of our Constitution. The danger is not fabricated, or imaginary, but real, and substantial, and imminent. In such a condition, I will not withhold my services, if I should be called upon to act; and certainly, I cannot act against the Government under so dreadful a peril. My first advice to those who might consult me, would be to resort to the powerful aid of your Lordship and your family. But I have not yet seen enough of the dispositions or views of those actually in power, to enable me to form any correct judgment of the ultimate result of the present crisis. Your obliging letter, however, furnishes me with sufficient knowledge of your sentiments, to direct my course, as far as it may lead to any suggestion of your disposition; and you may be assured that I will use the confidence with which you have honoured me, most cautiously and carefully. I should rejoice most sincerely, if the result should be favourable to my wishes; but, at present, I know no more than I stated to your Lordship in my last letter.

Believe me always, my dear Lord, with sincere regard and esteem,

Yours, most faithfully,
WELLESLEY.

The cloud which had for some time been darkening the political horizon, now broke into a fearful storm, the effect of which was felt for many subsequent months; Manchester, the focus of all the sedition and turbulence of England, had long been preparing for a decisive demonstration, and on the 16th of August, notwithstanding the prosecution of the Stockport incendiaries, and the prohibition of the authorities, a monster meeting took place in the neighbourhood, attended with more than the usual military marchings and revolutionary displays. The ostensible cause was " Reform," but judging by the inscriptions on the banners, there were at least half a dozen ostensible causes—the frequent display of the Cap of Liberty, was much more significant of the object, which was made more evident by the appearance of women in bands among the congregated masses—another feature from the French revolution. " *Let us die like men, and not be sold like slaves !*"—was inscribed on their *red* banner, indicating their impression that they were marching to a death-struggle; sufficiently inflammatory to the men whom they were called upon to imitate, but scarcely creditable to their manly natures, for allowing females—probably their wives and daughters—a position of such apparent danger. On a *black flag*, the words, " *Equal representation, or Death*," were equally significant.

From towns and villages at a considerable distance, associated bands, with more or less military and revolutionary display, flocked to the rendez-vous, in a field called Peterloo; and the town and district of Manchester were in a state of fearful alarm, from the constant marchings of these evidently well drilled bodies. Not content with making a demonstration of their strength, they made a more threatening display of their martial education, by going through various evolutions, to the sound of the bugle, as they passed along, as the report says, "in very regular time, closing and expanding their ranks, and marching in ordinary and double quick time, according as it pleased the fancy of their leaders to direct them." In short, it was a direct imitation of the Irish rebellion of 1798, got up probably with the assistance of some of the heroes of Wexford Bridge and Vinegar Hill, the neighbourhood abounding with Irish operatives of various ages, some of whom may have escaped justice twenty years before.

Be this as it may, at least 80,000 men in this formidable array, took up ground in the place just named. Their chief leader, Mr. Orator Hunt, was so very earnest in the cause of Liberty, that he was making a grand attempt to divert taxation from the pockets of his multitudinous admirers, into his own, by substituting certain compounds, termed, "Hunt's Herb-Tea, and Tobacco," and "Roasted Corn," for those taxable, yet at least genuine luxuries, tea, tobacco, and coffee. He had, however, scarcely commenced from a commanding position, to address his followers, when a detachment of sixty men of "the Manchester Yeomanry Cavalry," entered the field at a brisk trot. Scarcely had their horses heads become visible, when a panic seized the battalions which had so short a time before ostentiously displayed their military training, and that confusion which indicates a rapid retreat, was clearly perceptible. The cavalry drew their swords, and the candidates for martyrdom attempted to escape. The troop then advanced towards the waggons that contained Mr. Hunt and his colleagues, surrounded the latter and took them into custody, seizing at the same time, some of their treasonable flags, which were carried in mock ceremony before the prisoners.

Out of the 80,000, a few wedged closely round the waggons, ventured on hostilities in the shape of a shower of brick-bats and heavy stones. A missile of the most formidable kind struck one of the yeomanry so heavily, that he dropped the reins, the horse fell, and his rider was thrown, fracturing his skull in the fall. This assault, from which many of the troop suffered to a less degree, may probably have given an additional impulse to their advance, for before the immense mob could be dispersed, four persons were killed, and forty-four wounded—a few by the trampling of the horses, but the greater number by the crush occasioned by the frantic efforts of such a mass to get out of the way of the soldiery.

A greater loss of life has more than once been created by a panic in a theatre, when the stronger have crushed and trampled the weaker to death, while making their escape from a real or imaginary danger.

Here were 80,000 men and women cooped up in a narrow space, and seized with as frantic a panic. The majority were pretty sure to get out of the way of the horses; but it was almost impossible, they could get out of their own. The fact that only one person was wounded by a sabre cut, shows clearly that the mob kept at a sufficient distance from the cavalry. Nevertheless, it suited the spouters of treason, and their abettors, to style it a "massacre;" and to try to make the rest of the community believe this, they published a coloured engraving of the scene, in which the yeomanry were represented cutting and slashing at women and children.

A great number of the rioters were seized and imprisoned; yet depredations by tumultuous assemblages continued to be committed in the neighbourhood, till the appearance of a strong military force; when, as usual, they simultaneously dispersed. But it was not in the manufacturing districts only, where disorder and sedition prevailed; in the metropolis and its vicinity it was equally rife. Monster meetings were held at Kennington and Smithfield, and a manufactory of pikes discovered in Shoreditch.

The precautions taken to prevent mischief, and the trials of the conspirators, kept the public mind in a ferment for several months. The latter did all they could to defeat the ends of justice, by bringing accusations against certain individuals of the Manchester Yeomanry, for maliciously cutting and stabbing, and against another person, for perjury in his deposition respecting the illegal meeting. But the nature of these proceedings was so palpable, that the Grand Jury threw out all the Bills of Indictment.

In other places, the representations of Hunt and his followers were more successful; and, throughout the month of September, monster meetings were held in various parts of the country, partaking more or less of a menacing character, that exhibited sympathy with the conspirators, and hostility to the Government. The Court of Common Council also held a crowded meeting, and passed resolutions reflecting on the Manchester magistrates. A few days afterwards, Orator Hunt, now called "the Champion of Liberty," who was at large on bail, was permitted to enter the metropolis with a triumphant procession, and a concourse of 200,000 people. On the 17th, the city authorities, with a vast display of civic pomp, went in procession to Carlton House, to present an Address to the Prince Regent. His Royal Highness, attended by Lord Sidmouth, Lord Liverpool, the Duke of Wellington, and others of his confidential servants, received the imposing deputation with his customary urbanity; and after listening to the prayer of the Address, "to institute an *immediate* and *effectual* enquiry into the outrages that have been committed, and cause the guilty perpretrators thereof to be brought to speedy and condign punishment," replied in terms very far from encouraging to the fifty or sixty gentlemen who had thought proper to come on such an errand, commending the zeal of the magistrates they had condemned, stigmatizing the proceedings of the conspirators whom they appeared to patronize, and declining to institute the extra-judicial enquiry they had proposed.

Another City meeting, that of the inhabitants of the Ward of Cheap, was held on the 24th of September, when resolutions condemning the Manchester magistrates were proposed and rejected by a considerable majority, and others, approving the conduct of both the magistrates and yeomanry, agreed to. One of the speakers assured the meeting that, of the troop of sixty, who dispersed this formidable mob, thirty-two had been wounded. The Court of Aldermen soon afterwards held a meeting, in which they severely condemned the blasphemous and seditious publications which were being circulated all over the country. Meetings of a similar creditable character began to be general, and loyalty and common sense were evidently among the respectable classes, getting the better of impudence and falsehood. At this period, the following letters were written.

RIGHT HONOURABLE THOMAS GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Vale Royal, October 1, 1819.

My dear Lord Buckingham,

I am not surprised to find that the Manchester proceedings still occupy all the conversation in these parts. Mr. Bankes, who is just come here from thence, says that the upper orders, and particularly ladies are daily insulted by the populace there, and that several persons who occupy the little villas close to the town, are selling their houses, and moving from the neighbourhood of that city. I am glad to see that (with the exception of Lord Grosvenor's foolish letter, and Lord Dundas's foolish speech at York), no gentleman of any respectability, has as yet given any countenance to the Manchester Reformers: and I see with pleasure to-day, that Lord A. Hamilton, has been proposing to raise Yeomanry Cavalry in Scotland, and has been pronouncing the necessity of increasing that Constitutional force.

I cannot understand what the Home Secretary is doing, that we do not hear of such an increase being recommended to all the Lord Lieutenants as far as it can be found practicable. Surely the public parade of the French Cap of Liberty, the military array which is practised by the Reformers, the "Ca Ira," and "Marseillaise," which constitutes the military music of the Reformers, their denunciation of the *servility of the middling orders of society*, their seditious sermons, as well as the language of all their speeches, calls for a good deal more vigorous measures of defence and resistance, than we as yet have seen any traces of. I hope and believe the mass of the country, though distressed, is not yet disaffected; but active means are a-foot to make them so, and the times demand more vigorous and active wisdom than I expect will be supplied by the Ministers of the country. I stay here till the 9th.

Yours affectionately,

T. G.

LORD GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Dropmore, October 3, 1819.

I just write one line to say that you shall hear from me more fully to morrow. I hope to see Lord Carrington, in the morning, whose concurrence is a point of no small importance, whether the case arises in the Hundreds, or in the County.

I have some doubt whether, in the former case, the measure to the full extent as talked of, would not be beyond the importance of the case, and we should want the support which a long list of considerable names would give to our view of the subject.

Of George,[1] and his politics, I can say nothing; but if you really think any such thing is in agitation, I think you should not omit to apprize him, you best know how, that in the event of any such attempt, either in the County or Borough, you should deem it necessary to take a forward part in the opposition to it.

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[1] Lord Nugent.

The ground of objection to press on him, as on all reasonable men, is the wickedness of prejudicing by partial and popular discussions, the guilt or innocence of individuals against whom criminal proceedings are in some cases depending, and in other cases menaced to the extent of putting even their lives in jeopardy.

The answer made in the City Meeting to this argument is wretched, viz: that the Ministers have by their thanks prejudged the case on the other side. If this were true, it would be an example to be avoided, not imitated. But it is false, because the thanks are only for their readiness in obeying the call of the Magistrates, and leave open the propriety of the call, and the more or less of temper, &c. with which it was executed.

CHAPTER XVII.

[1819.]

PUBLIC LETTER OF THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM ON THE STATE OF THE NATION — LETTER FROM THE DUKE OF YORK IN ITS COMMENDATION — OPINIONS OF HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS — LORD GRENVILLE AND THE HONOURABLE THOMAS GRENVILLE WARMLY APPROVE LORD BUCKINGHAM'S PUBLICATION — HIS APPEAL FOR UNION SECONDED BY GENTLEMEN OF INFLUENCE AND DISTINCTION —MR. PLUNKETT AND THE MARQUIS WELLESLEY—LORD GRENVILLE'S IDEAS ON THE PRESENT POSITION OF THE COUNTRY.

CHAPTER XVII.

The energy which, in this crisis, was wanting in the Home Secretary, was displayed by several loyal noblemen — among whom was the Marquis of Buckingham—and this was not the first time he had volunteered to uphold the most valuable institutions of the Empire. The reply to the proposition he had submitted to the highest military authority, is interesting as a proof of the estimation in which he was held by a distinguished member of the Royal Family, and as a favourable specimen of the strong sense which his Royal Highness generally brought to bear upon questions of public interest.

THE DUKE OF YORK TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Bagshot Park, October 5, 1819.

My dear Lord,

I hasten to return to you my warmest thanks for the very obliging letter of the 2nd, that I had, this morning, the pleasure of receiving from you, and for the copy you have had the goodness to enclose to me of your answer to the Earl of Carnarvon, upon the subject of calling a meeting in Hampshire, to consider the late proceedings at Manchester. I need not, I trust, assure you, that this fresh proof of your confidence and friendship, which I so highly value, is very gratifying to me; and that it always affords me the sincerest satisfaction to hear from your Lordship, and to communicate confidentially with you upon all public measures.

The present state of the country is, in my mind, truly alarming; and I entirely agree with you in lamenting that any countenance should be given to the advocates of rebellion, and the promoters of civil war. I, therefore, lament that meetings called for the same purpose that Hunt and his associates recommended, that the different counties should assemble, are likely to be attended by persons who deprecate, I am sure, as much as we can, the intentions of that man and his party; as their presence will certainly be construed by them, into an approval of their acts; and in the inflamed state of the public mind, it is impossible to expect that the lower orders can draw very nice distinctions.

I also most deeply regret to see many respectable names, as subscribers to a fund which, I am apprehensive, will be turned to the worst purposes. But I must candidly confess, that if Parliament were assembled, I should consider it highly fitting, in both Houses, to inquire into the late proceedings at Manchester; as, when any event has occasioned a great public sensation, and blame, whether justly or unjustly, has been thrown upon any persons in official situations, in the execution of their trusts, in my opinion it is the duty of Parliament to investigate the subject, and satisfy the public mind. Should it be proved, which I hope it will, that no blame attaches to the Magistrates, or Yeomanry of Manchester, the country will be easy upon the subject, and there will be no pretext for clamour, which would certainly not be the case, if inquiry were refused. But if, unhappily, it should turn out, which I anxiously wish may not be the case, that there was impropriety in their conduct, then the proving that equal justice is done to all parties, is the most likely way of assuaging the present feverish state of the public mind. We must be firm in supporting the Constitution, and in putting down the machinations of evil-disposed persons; but we must never afford a pretext for complaint, by attempting to stifle enquiry, or for want of proving ourselves to be upon sound and good grounds. For these reasons, I grieve to see these different public meetings called, as they can only tend to increase the present ferment; and as none of us can know the real truth of the case, declarations either in favour or against the conduct of the Magistrates and Yeomanry of Manchester, strike me as prejudging the question, and, therefore, as very improper.

In that friendly confidence which, I trust, will ever exist between us, and which is a source of the truest gratification to me, I have stated my ideas to you at length, upon the question that now occupies so greatly the attention of every one; and I am happy to seize this opportunity of renewing to you an assurance of the very sincere attachment and high esteem with which

I am always,
My dear Lord,
Most truly yours,
William Frederick.

MR. CHARLES WILLIAMS WYNN TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Dropmore, October 8, 1819.

I have read your letter with much pleasure. You will have seen, by what I wrote yesterday, how closely we agree, both in sentiment and in expression.

It is lamentable to see such men as Lord Carnarvon, deceiving themselves with the notion of keeping these things in the hands of men of rank and property, when the real and only object which the conspirators have in view, is to level all rank, and plunder all property.

If your letter were made (as it well might) the groundwork of a public manifesto, on the part of those who disapprove these meetings, some reserve would be wanted, for the possible case of Parliament being obliged to act for the maintenance of the public peace. I find there is still a notion, in the north, of the intention of some general rising before Christmas. I do not believe it, because, with what has now occurred, they have a better game before them, by confining themselves to their present turbulent meetings, and seditious language and writings, which are so rapidly preparing the way for the revolution which they intend.

But in this, as in other cases, the instruments may become too powerful for the guidance of the leaders; and then, nothing but Parliament can, if that can, save us from the consequences.

I believe the early meeting of Parliament has been under consideration—how decided, I know not. If it is now done, it comes too late, and will have the appearance of being forced upon them by the fear of Yorkshire, &c. &c.

Should there be any occasion to use the paper I sent you yesterday, one alteration seems necessary; viz., "That the facts, &c., *have been*, and are the subjects of inquest and trial, which are, in some cases, still actually depending, and are, in others, about to be instituted," &c.

The object of this change is, as you will see, to include the bills *thrown* out by the Lancashire Grand Jury, as well as those *found* there or elsewhere.

I think you ought to communicate these letters to Lilies,[1] that if any disposition to a different course does exist there, it may, at least, not be acted upon, without the previous knowledge of your opinions and conduct.

RIGHT HONOURABLE THOMAS GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Wynnstay, October 14, 1819.

MY DEAR LORD B.,

I read with great pleasure, in the newspaper of this morning's post, your letter to Lord Carnarvon. It takes the true ground upon which such meetings should be discouraged, and I am very glad that it has found its way into general circulation where I hope and trust it will be of use.

I came here yesterday, and rejoice to find Charles's[2] opinion on this subject so entirely agreeing with mine.

I continue to be strongly of opinion, that, under the present circumstances of the country, the Yeomanry force of the counties ought to be increased; and I still think the negligence of Ministers, in not recommending this measure to all the Lord-Lieutenants, most unaccountable. Watkin[3] and Charles, both of them highly approve your letter. Charles writes to-night (through the Lord-Lieutenant), to offer an augmentation of his Montgomery Yeomanry, and an extension of their services. And Watkin has just written to Lord Sidmouth a similar offer from Denbighshire. The same step is to be proposed, likewise, at a Cheshire County meeting to-morrow. The advantage of this measure is, that it affords an opportunity of displaying a constitutional desire of supporting the Civil Government of the country, and supplies the most efficient means for its support.

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[1] The seat of Lord Nugent.

[2] Charles Williams Wynn.

[3] Sir Watkin Williams Wynn, Bart.

I am sorry that I cannot find you at Stowe, in my way to Dropmore, where I am going, towards Thursday or Friday next, 21st at latest. But I have some hopes of meeting you at Audley End, with the Cholmondeleys, on the 4th November, if I can contrive that visit, and one afterwards to G. Neville, to see the Pepys Library, &c., at Cambridge.

You know I am not very erratical (if there is such a word for wandering) at Christmas, though old habits carry me to Althorp. I have half promised the Lansdownes, and would take Stowe in my way next December, if I have courage to leave my own fire.

Yours most affectionately,
T. G.

MR. CHARLES WILLIAMS WYNN TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Welsh Pool, October 15, 1819.

My dear B.,

Though I am up to my ears in all the pomp and circumstance of glorious war, I must write one line, to tell you how much pleasure I have derived from your letter to Lord Carnarvon, which appears to me exactly what it should be, and to express the sentiments in which we were perfectly agreed at Wynnstay.

Imperfect as our information still is, of the circumstances attending the Manchester business, I see nothing which induces me to apprehend that the magistrates have done anything not strictly and legally justifiable, though I wish I were as well satisfied of their discretion, and that they had taken all proper steps to warn those who had mixed with the crowd, in execution of their duty as special constables, and even the idle gazers to withdraw, before the military were ordered to act. For that they were ordered to act, seems to be the case, and that it does not turn out as I expected, that they had done it of their own accord, in self-defence. I hear from several quarters, that it can be most satisfactorily proved, that violence was offered in various ways, before a blow was struck by the Yeomanry, but that they acted by the positive orders of the Magistrates. We shall, I conclude, meet at the opening of the Session, since you will, of course, choose to be in your place on the first day.

Ill as I think of the effect and object of the county meetings, and much as I regret to see the name of Lord Fitzwilliam to a requisition for one, the contributions of Opposition to a fund professedly for the object of inquiring into the Manchester transactions, but avowedly and openly placed at the disposal of Mr. Hunt, and a Committee of his nomination with Messrs Harmer and Pearson as its agents and instruments, seem to exceed in absurdity, as well as mischief, anything I have yet imagined possible.

Can those who have subscribed, any longer affect to disclaim a union with the persons whose expenditure they think it safe to provide for, without check or restriction.

My wife is at the sea; and I hope that this unusually fine weather will add to its efficacy in restoring her strength.

I shall stay here campaigning and quarter-sessioning, till this day se'nnight, and shall then return to Wynnstay.

Ever affectionately yours,

C. W. W. W.

The Marquis of Buckingham communicated with other influential persons on this engrossing subject, and, as it will appear, found his opinions echoed in every quarter, and his appeal for union cordially responded to. This appeal had been called for by the imprudent conduct of Lord Fitzwilliam and others, in interposing in favour of the disturbers of the public peace.

MARQUIS WELLESLEY TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Strathfieldsaye, October 22, 1819. Friday.

MY DEAR LORD,

Your kind letter of the 20th reached me this morning at this place, where I have been some time with my brother Arthur, endeavouring to disturb the pheasants.

I assure your Lordship, that I feel sincerely with you on every point of your statement; and that I shall be most happy to co-operate with you actively and cordially in maintaining the existing frame of the Constitution unimpaired, against the avowed design of demolishing it.

I thought you would not object to the communication of your letter to the Duke,[1] who was very much gratified by learning your sentiments on an occasion, which he considers, as you have well expressed it, vital to the existence of the country. With his permission, I inform your Lordship, that the Government has viewed the conduct of some leading characters of Opposition in the same light, in which you have placed it; and that, considering Lord Fitzwilliam to have in effect, encouraged the disturbers of the public tranquillity, in violation of his official duty, the Prince Regent has removed his Lordship from his Lieutenancy in Yorkshire, and appointed Lord Harewood in his place. This step, which appears to have been indispensable, will soon be publicly known, and I conclude, will excite considerable ferment.

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[1] Duke of Wellington.

I return to Richmond to-morrow, and I shall be there, or within reach, to obey your Lordship's commands at any time, when you may wish to see me. Many circumstances have occurred, which I cannot commit to writing, but which I shall be happy to state, whenever I may have the pleasure of seeing you.

In the meanwhile, I take the liberty of enclosing a private note, to which I request your Lordship's attention.

Always,
My Dear Lord,
With true regard, and esteem,
Yours most faithfully,
WELLESLEY.

—— TO MARQUIS WELLESLEY.

I am informed, by authority which I cannot doubt, that Mr. Plunkett, the great Irish lawyer, is decidedly of opinion that the meeting at Manchester was treasonable; that he is much alarmed at the present state of this island; that he entirely disapproves the part taken by the Whigs; but that he does not intend to appear in Parliament, although he will not support them in their actual career.

His appearance and exertions on the day of the meeting, [of Parliament] would be of the utmost importance; I do not exaggerate, when I declare that they would probably save this country from confusion and bloodshed.

I will not suggest the personal advantages to himself, of such an effort in such a crisis—they must be evident to all his friends, amongst whom, I wish to be numbered. But I know, that Mr. Plunkett's spirit soars far above all personal considerations.

In my conscience, I think, that his duty towards the country absolutely requires that he should declare his sentiments on this occasion.

Perhaps your Lordship, or Lord Grenville might induce Mr. Plunkett to attend on the day of the meeting: It would be a great public service.

MARQUIS WELLESLEY TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Richmond, October 24, 1819. Sunday.

My dear Lord,

On my arrival here, I saw the person from whom I received the intelligence respecting Mr. Plunkett, which I communicated to your Lordship in my last letter. I now find that Mr. Plunkett's sentiments were disclosed incidentally in the course of private conversation; and although no restraint of secresy was imposed, my friend would not wish any mention to be made of a matter of such a description.

If, therefore, your Lordship or Lord Grenville should write to Mr. Plunkett, it would be necessary, as a point of delicacy towards my friend, not to mention any knowledge of Mr. Plunkett's sentiments in the present state of affairs in this country. But my friend has imparted another circumstance to me, which may cast a doubt upon the advantages of applying to Mr. Plunkett just at this moment. He says that Mr. Plunkett is so much attached to Lord Fitzwilliam, and entertains so high a respect for his Lordship, that considerable effect may be produced on Mr. Plunkett's mind by what has lately passed.

I thought this information, as connected with my last letter to your Lordship, could not reach you too soon, I have, therefore, sent it by express; the same opportunity will enable your Lordship to return an answer, if you shall think any necessary.

Believe me to be always,
My Dear Lord,
Yours most faithfully,
WELLESLEY.

LORD GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Dropmore, October 29, 1819.

I return Wellesley's letter—he wrote to me on the same subject.

I have written very much at large to Plunkett, stating my opinions on the past quite unreservedly, and also communicating to him as rough sketches for consideration, my notions of measures of prevention for the future.

They are summarily:

1. An Address to the Crown to send instanter, a Commission of Oyer and Terminer and goal delivery for the Northern Counties. We shall be told of terms and sittings, and snows and floods; but all these might have been avoided in October, (not the snow indeed, for we had it here for some hours on the ground last week), and of two evils, the giving the Judges cold is of less importance than keeping the country for six months longer in a fever.

2. The permanent and universal institution of Autumn Assizes, if not of Winter Assizes too.

3. The shortening of these delays by traverse, *certiorari*, and heaven knows what else, calculated for nothing but profits to lawyers and their clerks.

4. The refusing bail, (except by authority of the courts above) on all indictments found, for sedition, tumult, &c. &c.

5. To enable Judges, and even inferior Courts and Magistrates to commit, instanter, for any insult to their authority, or for deliberate perseverance in lines of examination, plea, defence, &c. &c., which they have pronounced to be against law, and to continue the trial nevertheless, only appointing, if the prisoner desires it, counsel to carry on his defence in his absence.

The first power they now have beyond a doubt, that of commitment; but then, with the withdrawal of the prisoner, I conceive in many cases the trial would cease.

6. To enable Magistrates, after indictment found against any person for a seditious or blasphemous publication, and before trial, to seize it if exposed for sale or publication by the defendant, or in his house or shop, and after verdict found against it, to seize it wherever exposed to sale, &c.

And generally to do all that can be done to strengthen the authority of all Courts and Magistrates in the execution of the law.

7. To declare assemblies under certain descriptions, to be illegal, and to declare the duty of all Magistrates to suppress all illegal assemblies.

8. To arm them also with the power of prohibiting popular meetings on such spots where they cannot be held without interruption of the lawful business, or danger to the lawful security of the King's subjects; and also to forbid all flags, music, array, and badges of distinction generally, and also specially such as they shall *ex re natâ* think dangerous to the public peace.

I have particularlized these, but added that there are some others which I have myself thought of, and that others may be proposed by Government, or individuals in which I might concur, and have desired his opinion on the whole.

I have, I believe, talked most of these over with you, but I mention them to shew you what is floating in my mind.

Do not talk much of them, and above all, do not let them get round to the Government till I hear from Plunkett. I should not like to be committed to support them, till I hear his judgment upon them.

RIGHT HONOURABLE W. C. PLUNKETT TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Old Connaught Bray, October 30, 1819.

My Lord,

I have, this day, had the honour of receiving your Lordship's letter of the 25th, and feel very much obliged by your kindness in communicating your opinion on the present alarming state of public affairs; most alarming indeed it is; every thing, on every side, calculated to increase the gloom. Even with the imperfect knowledge which I had been able to acquire, I had anticipated much of the difficulty of our situation, although I had not been led to suppose the crisis so rapidly approaching as I perceive you apprehend: all honest men, completely divested of personal, or party feelings, must agree in the necessity of uniting for the protection of the laws, and, indeed, of our civil fabric, whose destruction, I do sincerely believe, is aimed at by a numerous, organized, and desperate body, and though I cannot but disapprove much of what has been done, on the part of Ministers, yet I consider, all subjects merely personal to them, as so very secondary, that I could not, for a moment, suffer them to retard, or weaken, any effort, or to stand in the way of the adoption of any measures, which the public exigencies might require; at the same time, it appears to me most important to take care that their indiscretions may not afford advantage to our enemies.

I am persuaded, that there is a sound portion of the English public, strong enough to put down the revolutionists, and well disposed to do so; but in order to embark them heartily in the cause, they must be assured that they have the laws and the constitution in the same bottom with them. Any misgiving on this score would, indeed, be most disastrous. Still, however, I trust, this can be effected, without neglecting any of those means of precaution or vigour, which the urgency of the crisis may demand; and, however I may lament many things which appear to me, neither to have the marks of firmness nor of wisdom; still, I would cheerfully and conscientiously concur in any measure calculated to strengthen the civil arm, and to repress, in its first movements, a system which, if it gets head, might soon prove too strong, even for the united powers of all parties to contend with it. Your Lordship, I trust, does not require my assurances of the high importance which I attach to your opinions; and I have that entire confidence in the wisdom and integrity of Lord Grenville, that, where he is, I consider myself in safety. With these impressions, I shall certainly attend at the meeting of Parliament, I own, under strong feelings of anxiety and embarrassment, and with a consciousness of my inability to render any useful service.

I have the honour to be,
My Lord,
With great respect and regard,
Always your Lordship's faithful and obedient Servant,
W. C. PLUNKETT.

MR. CHARLES WILLIAMS WYNN TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Acton, October 30, 1819.

MY DEAR B.,

The fear which you mention of the probability of Hunt's acquittal, gives me much concern, as I think, in the present temper of the jurors of the county of Chester, such an event is not to be apprehended, unless the grounds for bringing him to trial should be so weak that the judge should sum up in his favour. Now, the case must be a very defective one indeed for this to happen, since that judge will be Warren, who has all the zeal of an apostate from Jacobinism, and a candidate for the future favours of Government. My own expectation was rather that the poor orator would not meet with tolerably fair play from either judge or jury. If, however, he should escape, it certainly will be a heavy blow to the cause of good order, whether that escape shall arise from the misconduct of the jurors, or the insufficiency of evidence.

If, as the magistrates themselves assert, they can prove a complete justification (not a mere legal one) of the whole of their conduct, I think it has been unwise to allow the public mind to be prejudiced as it has against them by the uncontradicted statements which have appeared, and on which nine in ten even of *good sort of people* have formed their opinions, and announced them so as to pledge themselves. I trust that it will appear that the information on which they grounded their warrant against Hunt, was not received previous to the actual assembly of the people, and then they will only have to account for their want of courage, in not going themselves into the crowd with the constables and yeomanry, and of prudence in not giving more public notice to disperse.

I regret extremely the dismissal of Lord Fitzwilliam, though I do not deny that, personally, he has deserved it, by deserting in his age the principles of his previous life; still, its effect will be to unite those Whigs who seemed disposed to separate themselves on the present occasion, such as the Duke of Devonshire, and throughout the country to afford matter of triumph to the disaffected, and of concern to the loyal. The conduct of Ministers will, I have no doubt, continue to be a series of weaknesses, broken in upon occasionally by the interspersion of a few displays of power, which, like the manifestations of courage of a coward, will usually be extravagant and injudicious.

What is supposed to be the meaning of the non-appearance of the Princess of Wales? Her coming is, of course, connected with *Manchester*, &c., since her favourite notion has long been that of putting herself at the head of a revolutionary mob. My present plan is to be at Dropmore on the morning of the 22nd, and to proceed to town the following day, as Lord Grenville tells me he thinks of not coming up for the first day. Against this intention I have argued as strongly as I could, but if he persists in it, I trust I shall find you there on the 22nd. I know you will say that I ought to come up earlier, but having already been separated so long from my family, I shall be most unwilling to leave them again, for a month, one day sooner than I can avoid. Many thanks to you for your invitation of me, with all my heavy and light baggage for Christmas; but as I suppose the effect of this early meeting will be a long adjournment, I shall come down again to this part of the world. I have no answer yet to my offer of increasing my yeomanry, though sent in above a fortnight ago, but whether the delay rests with Lord Sidmouth or Lord Powis, I do not know.

I shall return to Llangedwin to-morrow, and shall be most grateful for any news you will address to me there. I do not myself at all look to the present state of affairs leading to any offer to us, or that, if it should, it would be one that we could in prudence accept. Ministers are perfectly aware that they *must*, at all events, have our support, and will therefore see no reason for buying what will be given to them gratis.

Watkin has summoned a meeting of lieutenancy and magistracy "to consider of the best means of preserving the public peace, and strengthening the civil power, in this and the adjoining districts by the augmentation of the internal forces of the county." His plan is to increase the yeomanry to a regiment, and to take the command himself. He is so indignant about Lord Fitzwilliam, that I am glad he does not mean to come up to town.

Ever most affectionately yours,

C. W. W. W.

Mr. Williams Wynn's question, respecting the Princess of Wales, is easily answered. Her Royal Highness would not have been averse to throw herself into the centre of this Manchester revolution, and have taken that shallow demagogue Mr. Orator Hunt, as her chief counsellor, just as she had taken Mr. Whitbread, and just as she afterwards took Mr. Alderman Wood; but she was not quite ready to set her foot on English ground, and therefore, though at Lyons on the 12th of October, satisfied herself with publishing in "Galignani's Messenger," a characteristic announcement that she was coming to demand justice against her enemies.

CHAPTER XVIII.

[1819.]

MELANCHOLY STATE OF GEORGE THE THIRD—OBLIGATIONS OF THE GOVERNMENT TO THE GRENVILLES—ALARMING CONDITION OF THE COUNTRY—OPENING OF PARLIAMENT—SPEECH OF THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM IN DEFENCE OF THE MANCHESTER MAGISTRATES—PROCEEDINGS IN BOTH HOUSES—SPEECH OF LORD GRENVILLE IN DEFENCE OF THE MANCHESTER MAGISTRATES—RUMOURED CHANGES IN THE ADMINISTRATION—DEATH OF ADMIRAL SIR THOMAS FREMANTLE—NARROW ESCAPE OF THE PRINCESS VICTORIA.

CHAPTER XVI.

The condition of the King, excited profound sympathy wherever it was known, as the medical attendants who watched his Majesty most carefully, became satisfied that his earthly career was gradually but surely drawing to its termination. His appearance at this time is described, by eye witnesses, as singularly affecting, exhibiting the majesty of King Lear, without his passionate frenzy—a most touching spectacle of human nature in the last phase of existence, with sightless eyes, and flowing white hair and beard, tranquil, venerable, and resigned.

The recent proceedings of the Grenville Party, had been of essential service to the Government, and as it will presently be evident, the latter were not unmindful of their obligations. A sense of difficulty and danger, had drawn them closer together, and little was wanting to make the coalition perfect. The conduct, too, both of the Marquis of Buckingham, and of Lord Grenville, had attracted the favourable attention of the Prince Regent, who was extremely gratified by the publication of the Marquis's well timed letter, and by Lord Grenville's equally seasonable address from the University of Oxford, presented to His Royal Highness on the 18th of November. Both documents exerted a powerful influence on the side of loyalty.

RIGHT HONOURABLE THOMAS GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Dropmore, November 9, 1819.

MY DEAR LORD BUCKINGHAM,

I write a line, in case my brother should not have time to do so, to tell you that we had Halford from Windsor, two days ago, to see Fanny Proby on her return from Malvern; he told both my brother and Lady Carysfort, that six months ago, he thought the King as likely to live as any other man for three or four years, but that he had latterly fallen away so much, and was now so reduced, that he had no expectation of his life being much further prolonged. Nothing can in my mind, be more unfortunate than this intelligence; a general election, with all the riot and tumult that at all times is called forth by it, is in these days a most unfortunate event; nor is this all, for even the immediate apprehension of such an event will encourage the activity of all the demagogues, and will, I fear, be found to influence in Parliament the opinions of those who have to look to popular elections. Yet I hear so little of any vigorous measures to be proposed by Ministers, that I am sadly afraid that they will try to patch the thing up, and will leave to the Radicals all the powers they now exercise of terrifying the loyal and peaceable, of insulting the Judges, and of assassinating the Juries who find verdicts hostile to their wishes, and the constables who execute the warrants for their apprehension.

I am sorry to read Lord Arundel's letter, because it adds another public instance of the hostility provoked from the *Catholics* as such, which though I am not much surprised at, I still regret to see, because it will mainly injure their cause in its future discussions. My brother has had a long and very satisfactory letter from Plunkett, who promises to come a day or two before the meeting of Parliament. Charles has not named his day for coming; surely he will not be lazy enough to stay till the last day; he ought to be up at least three or four days before the meeting.

EARL OF CASSILIS TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Culzean Castle, November 11.

MY DEAR LORD BUCKINGHAM,

From the ten thousand things I have to do here, and likewise in the north of Scotland, it will be impossible for me to attend the meeting of Parliament, and therefore I send my proxy blank, in case you should be full. I read with great delight your Hampshire letter. It was well timed, and did an infinity of good. We are tolerably quiet in this quarter; nearer Glasgow, in a state of great disturbances. I am, in some degree proud to say, that not a single man from my district, which contains near forty miles of coast, attended the meeting at Ayr, of radicals. I presume you will be present at the meeting of Parliament, and will thunder retribution upon the heads of those most horrible fellows.

Lord Howden writes me, that the Yorkshire radicals wait, they say, to see what Parliament will do, and if not satisfied, will take the jurisdiction in their own hands. If Pitt had been alive, things would not have got this length. I am clear for strong, and decided measures. Lenity will be thrown away, and only add fuel to the fire. What mischief the Yorkshire, and other meetings have done. Fitzwilliam is at present, in consultation at Chatsworth, I believe. I hear, that every one of the Yeomanry corps proposed to be raised by the Duke of Hamilton, have retracted. Those who at first came forward, have withdrawn; whether through fear, or what cause, I can't say; it is reported, from the threatening letters they got. If so, we are better without such defenders of the constitution. How are Ministers to get on? is my friend Sidmouth to be the only sacrifice? I should think that would not enable them to make much way. Pray have the charity to write to me what you think about it. I am glad to hear, that Lord Grenvelle means to express his opinions. I had a letter from him yesterday. It would be a grand time for him to come forward; but I dread his being immoveable.

I am, my dear Lord,
Your truly faithful obedient servant,
CASSILIS.[1]

The weavers in this quarter are literally starving; the utmost that an ordinary weaver can make per week, free money, is 2*s.* 7*d.*, working from fourteen to sixteen hours in the day.

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[1] Afterwards Marquis of Ailsa.

RIGHT HONOURABLE THOMAS GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Dropmore, November 12, 1819.

MY DEAR LORD B.,

My brother, after some consideration, has thought it right to send to Lord Liverpool a few heads of the same suggestions which he had talked over with you, as applicable to the danger of these times. He is tired this evening; and I have undertaken merely to apprise you, to-night, of his having so written by this post. He will himself write to you more at length to-morrow.

Ever most affectionately yours,

T. G.

MR. W. H. FREMANTLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Englefield Green, November 18, 1819.

MY DEAR LORD,

I am just come from Dropmore, where I have been for the last two days, and am quite delighted at the mood and temper in which I found Lord Grenville. Nothing, I think, can be more satisfactory than the decision of his mind, and the steps he has taken to disclose it. I saw the correspondence which has passed, and which is most gratifying, both as it regards Lord Liverpool and the Government, and as to Plunkett; and it is not now a question whether we are to hold off, and merely to strengthen certain points; but it is general and determined resistance to these new fangled doctrines of the Whigs, and an open avowal of the wish and determination to keep the Government out of their hands. Lord Bathurst wanted to come to Dropmore to-day, but Lord

Grenville put him off, by saying, he should be in town ong enough before the meeting, to enable him to communicate and consult with him on the points to be brought forward. I only mention this, to show the intimacy, the confidence, and the communications which now exist. I think, independent of all this, the line Lord Grenville has taken, and the manner in which he has done it, is manly, honourable, and statesman-like.

I shall go to town on Monday evening, and will see you on Tuesday morning. I was glad to hear from your Uncle Tom, that you had told him that Neville was all right. There is literally now nothing astray, but Lords Nugent and Ebrington.

Plunkett will be a host on these legal discussions. I wish he may take his seat on our bench.

Ever truly yours,
W. H. Fremantle.

The Prince Regent was at Windsor a few days ago, just before he went to Brighton, and said to the Duchess of Gloucester, that nothing could have been so manly and honourable as your conduct had been, in coming forward so early and so decidedly in your opinions, and in your support of the Crown, and by which you had given the tone to others, and stopped the proceedings in Hampshire. It is getting about, the state of the King's health—he wastes, and does not eat.

EARL OF CASSILIS TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Culzean, November 27.

MY DEAR LORD BUCKINGHAM,

I think, from your letter, that you seem impressed with an idea, that in the west of Scotland, things are in a most deplorable state of confusion, if not rebellion. I live within thirty-five miles of Glasgow, and much nearer to Killmarnock, and some of the chief manufacturing towns; and, therefore, may be said to have a daily opportunity of knowing what is passing; and I really think our situation is exceedingly exaggerated, *in the south.* Things are certainly not in a good state, but they are not in such a position as to cause any dread of an *overset of the state coach.* How can we be quiet, when, in Glasgow alone, I dare say there is nearer to thirty thousand than any other number, of *idle Irish of the worst class,* in addition to our own unemployed weavers, and a proportionate number in all the surrounding towns. Putting State questions of Reform, &c., out of the case, how can it be expected, that such a mass of *ragged rascals,* ready to catch at anything, would be quiet. Riot and depredation is more their object, than reform, or anything else. They have no head to conduct them; not a man of any intellect or character, and are utterly incapable of conducting themselves. Then, what can all this arrive at? I am thoroughly satisfied, that nine-tenths of the people are loyal; some may be misled, and are so; but you will see that they will return to their duty. The great misfortune is, that the wicked have been allowed too much time to lead away the unthinking; but I have no dread of any serious result to the State. It is quite possible, that when Parliament comes to put an extinguisher upon their meetings, and liberty, as they will call it, that, in this quarter, we may have a scuffle—

I mean, at Glasgow—and the sooner that arrives, the better. But I have no doubt, that it will be of short duration, and decisive. I really think, that one troop of dragoons, at our county town of Ayr, would keep all within thirty miles quiet.

At our county Radical meeting (and this is one of the largest counties in Scotland), it was reported, that eight thousand persons were present, or more. I dare say, there might have been half that number, a great proportion of which, was the travelling mob from Killmarnock, &c.; and out of the whole number, I am told, not fifteen hundred of the *Black Crew*. Then, what is this, to our population, and loyal body? My belief is, that we are sound in the main, and that, if you can take care of yourselves in your manufacturing districts, you need not dread anything from this quarter. I have a great many of the idle, as they are called, employed about my place, from the villages about me. I don't know how many offers of service I have had. I think I could raise three companies in as many days, within a short distance, beside our Yeomanry.

I am quite shocked at the length of this document; but I want to take off a little of the *melancholy* of your mind about our *Western* State. I had a private letter from Sidmouth some days ago, (don't suppose me on the Ministerial Benches), he says that the Yeomanry Force exceeds 20,000.

I am, my dear Lord Buckingham,
Yours very faithful servant,
CASSILIS.

I have read the Regent's *opening* to night, and look with great anxiety to your secession. Do something effectual, or you will do mischief. Pray say to Lord Grenville, that we are not altogether here so bad as represented. The enclosed from the Ayr Paper, states nearly the truth of our Loyal and Radical Meeting.

LIEUT.-GEN. MONTGOMERIE, PRESES.

The Advertisement calling the Meeting having been read, the following letter from the Earl of Eglingon to the Preses was laid before the Meeting:

It is with feelings of infinite regret, that I find myself, from the state of my health, totally unable to attend the Meeting of the County this day—a Meeting called by the Convenor and myself, which, we flatter ourselves, will meet with the approbation of the County at large. I would have been most anxious to have attended, and given my personal voice in support of those measures which I am sure the County will adopt to express their determination to support the Constitution of the Country, and to declare their personal attachment to the Sacred Person of His Royal Highness the Prince Regent, and their determination to rally around the Throne on this important and awful occasion.

It is needless for me to say more in this letter than to request you to lay it before the Meeting, as the Address will probably contain everything that is necessary for me to express upon the subject.

I have had the honour to receive a Letter from the Marquis of Bute, wherein his Lordship mentions his having observed with great pleasure in the last Ayr newspaper, that I had called a Meeting of the County to consider of an Address to the Prince Regent, being sure that it will contain a declaration of loyal attachment to the Throne and Constitution. His Lordship signifies at the same time, his regret at being prevented attending in Ayrshire on that occasion, but his Lordship has called a Meeting of the County of Bute for the object."

A Letter was produced from the Marquis of Bute, containing authority to sign his Lordship's name to any Address which the Meeting should adopt, expressive of attachment to the Throne and Constitution.

The reform meeting that took place in this neighbourhood on Saturday last, though it was expected to be the most numerous that had before been held in the county, turned out in reality to be the most tame and insignificant, whether we consider the numbers who attended, the characters of those who had the direction of it, or the speeches delivered on the occasion. Greatly to the credit of Carrick, though there are several populous manufacturing towns and villages within its bounds, where distress is felt as severely as in other places, not a single hand appeared from that district to support the grand cause; and there were but few or none of what may be called professed radicals from our good old town. The meeting seemed to consist chiefly of strangers from a distance, of whom Kilmarnock furnished the most numerous quota, and these, it is said, were so much dissatisfied and disappointed with the coolness that was shown on the occasion, that they marched off the ground, to the tune of "*we'll gang nae mair to yon toun.*" It deserves to be mentioned that though much noise has been made about the radical meetings of Ayrshire, and the spirit of disaffection that pervades its manufacturing population, these meetings have been composed of nearly the same persons, and directed by the same leaders, who merely shift their ground for the sake of effect, and that the avowed advocates of radical reform are exceedingly trifling in numbers, and far from being respectable in character, station, or talents.

The essential service rendered to the Administration by the support of the Grenville party, at this alarming juncture, was thus acknowledged by them. "It will be a satisfaction for you to hear," wrote Lord Sidmouth, to Lord De Dunstanville, "that Lord Wellesley, Lord Grenville, and their friends, in the two houses of Parliament, entertain and will express opinions in unison with those of the Government, or rather, of all persons of honest and intelligent minds, uninfluenced by party, throughout the kingdom.[1]"

It was satisfactory intelligence for every one to hear, except the parties implicated in seditious practices, or those equally culpable persons, who thought of raising political capital, out of the dangers which then threatened the monarchy.

Parliament was opened on the 23rd of November, by the Prince Regent in person, whose speech dwelt almost entirely upon the late disturbances, and on the necessity of strengthening the hands of the Government, to put down revolutionary outbreaks. On moving the address in the House of Lords, much opposition was exhibited by Lord Grey, and other Whig Peers, who demanded an enquiry into the conduct of the magistrates, but the Marquis of Buckingham, made a forcible speech, in which he stated the Courts of Law were open, therefore no Parliamentary enquiry was necessary. "They had seen treason abroad," he added, "and the religion of the land, called a farce to delude the unwary. Were they to pause before they sought remedies for these evils, while they were enquiring into the events at Manchester? They had heard the Constitution threatened with destruction, and had seen persons threatened, and even murdered for doing their duty. Were they to pause, before they found remedies for these evils, while they were enquiring into the events at Manchester? For these reasons, he should oppose the amendment, and support the original address." This declaration produced a sensible effect in favour of Ministers, who at the division, were in a majority of 159 to 34.

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[1] Hon. Dr. Pellew's "Life of Lord Sidmouth," Vol. III., p. 297.

In the other house, Mr. Tierney in his usual language, moved for an amendment, which was seconded by the Marquis of Tavistock; they were answered in a very effective speech by Lord Castlereagh, who successfully defended the Government, and the magistrates. Mr. Plunkett made a masterly speech, on the same side. After several members had been heard, the debate at three o'clock in the morning, was adjourned till next day, when the cause of the Constitution was powerfully supported by the Solicitor-General, Mr. Charles Williams Wynn, and Mr. Canning, against the harangues of Sir Francis Burdett, and one or two other members. Mr. Brougham made a moderate speech, the argument of which was, if the magistrates deserved reprobation, they should be the more severely punished. The division followed, and the Address was carried by 381 against 150.

A good deal of discussion subsequently arose in both Houses on the same subject, particularly on the 30th of November, in the House of Lords, when the Marquis of Lansdowne moved for a Select Committee to enquire into the state of the country. Both the Marquis Wellesley and Lord Grenville supported the Government with the full weight of their talents in debate; the latter in particular, delivering a most powerful appeal to the intelligence of the assembly he was addressing, and through them to the nation, in which he was warmly cheered.

He said, " every man in the country must consider that the progress of our evils had brought us into a most dangerous crisis, which he had watched so long, and for which he was so often treated as an alarmist. At no period of his life did he ever anticipate the amount of peril, which required a firm and manly effort to meet it. He was, indeed, anxious that Parliament should do everything possible to alleviate those distresses, which they all must deeply lament; but he did not agree that Parliament must be blamed, if it was found impossible to do so. He considered the conduct of the Manchester magistrates not only as free from all blame, but as highly meritorious. Courts of Law were open to receive well-founded complaints against the magistrates, and thank God! they were also open to receive their triumphant answer. If there be any individuals," he emphatically added, " who have contributed to increase the distress of the people, they are those who seduced them from habits of industry." In conclusion, he earnestly conjured the community to maintain the Constitution—" a solid advantage they ought never to sacrifice to any fanciful ideas."

Again there was a large majority in favour of Ministers (178 to 47), a similar debate in the Commons on the same day, terminated with a majority for Government of 395 to 150. Other divisions followed, when the restrictive measures of Ministers came to be debated, but in every instance, the influence of the Third Party, gave the Government such an accession of strength, that opposition effected little in the way of delay. One principle, however, was established, which the Government were blamed for allowing, though it gained them several votes from the more moderate Whigs—this is the subject of Mr. Fremantle's indignation in the next note.

MR. W. H. FREMANTLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Stanhope Street, December 6, 1819.

MY DEAR LORD,

I never was in a greater rage in my life, after all the battling and defence of the *principal* of the Seditious Meeting Bill, the Ministers have abandoned it by making it temporary, instead of permanent, which Castlereagh is to announce to day. Lord Grenville is outrageous—in fact, it is completely leaving him in the lurch, and after all the toadyism and compliments he has received for his manliness, Castlereagh has been bullied by the Country Gentlemen. It is really a pity, for in fact, it must keep afloat these horrible opinions, and the moment the Opposition carry this point, they will maintain, and with truth, that the evil is only temporary, and what has been said of its Radical existence, was all false, and to serve the purpose of alarm. This shews how thoroughly incompetent these people are to maintain a strong and efficient Government, when they are warped by every breath that blows. I have not the least doubt that their friends would have supported them, had they found the Government firm; but the moment Castlereagh shewed an indecision on Friday last, they of course, attacked him.

I am writing in a great hurry, as I am going down to the House.

Ever yours,

Half-past 4 o'clock. W. H. Fremantle.

The Radical faction were very violent during the progress of the Coercion Bills, and threatened largely, but as it will be seen, they did not succeed in frightening the supporters of Government.

LORD GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Dropmore, December 14, 1819.

There was so little appearance of further contest about the Bills in the House of Lords, that having ascertained that Grey was to set out for the North on Saturday, I betook myself again to my books and my farm.

I cannot (alarmist as I am), persuade myself that such projects as you speak of, are really ripe for execution, though I dare say, some of them are madmen enough to talk of such things, and even to mean to do them if they could. At all events, I think we are beforehand with them, and the assembling in one large body is exactly the best thing they could do for the purposes of those who are to resist them, and who would thus be enabled to concentrate their force also. Our only danger is from the multiplication of detached attacks, necessitating a great subdivision of the military.

I have no idea that your attendance in the House of Lords can be of any importance, unless rebellion actually breaks out and requires new measures, and even then, you will be better employed in Buckingham, than in London.

If you come across to Stowe, I hope you will make this your half-way house.

Much speculation was created about this time, and many rumours were afloat respecting changes in the Administration. Lord Grenville, however, could not be induced to put himself forward as a Minister, though quite willing to give his best advice in the formation of a new Government, should such a change be intended.

MR. CHARLES WILLIAMS WYNN TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Dropmore, Friday.

MY DEAR BUCKINGHAM,

I have only two minutes before the post goes out, but I cannot delay to tell you that on my suggesting to Lord Grenville the idea of his mediation in forming the arrangement of laying the basis of a new Administration, he without a moment's hesitation, said that he felt that to be a question totally distinct from that of taking office, upon which his determination was fixed; that he both *could* and *would* undertake such a task, as he was conscious that he might be of great use in its execution.

Of course you will not quote his expressions, or express more than your own confidence that such will be his sentiments.

Yours ever,
CH. W. W. W.

Nothing more of interest took place in Parliament to the 30th of the month, when it was prorogued till the 15th of February.

On the 19th of December, the country suddenly lost the services of a distinguished naval officer, whose share in this correspondence has added, we trust, to the interest of these volumes. Sir Thomas Fremantle died at Naples, after two days illness, while Vice-Admiral of the Blue, and Commander-in-chief of the Mediterranean. His remains were carried to the grave on the 23rd, with every demonstration of honour and respect it was possible for the Neapolitan Government to show—the entire garrison having been drawn out to line the streets, and the hearse preceded by a body of cavalry. The Neapolitan Minister, General Count Nugent, the Ambassadors of Great Britain, Austria, and the Netherlands, the Duke of Leeds, Earls Spencer and Wentworth, and all the English residents attended the funeral forming a train of upwards of fifty carriages. Six midshipmen carried the decorations and honours of the deceased, viz: G.C.B., G.C.H., G.C. of St. Ferdinand and of Merit, G.C. of St. Michael and St. George, Cross of Maria Therese, and the riband and badge of Trafalgar. The officers and seamen of the 'Rochfort,' eighty guns, that had borne the Admiral's flag, assisted in the ceremony, and Lieutenant Fremantle was chief mourner. Thus honourably terminated the career of the friend and favourite of Nelson, and his associate in the victories of Copenhagen and Trafalgar. But proud as he was of the favour of that great commander, he never ceased to acknowledge his greater obligations to the beneficial influence of his active and sincere friend at Stowe.

An incident occurred at Weymouth near the close of the year, that might have been attended with very serious consequences. The Duke and Duchess of Kent, with their infant daughter were at this fashionable watering place for the benefit of their health, when an apprentice boy, who had obtained a loaded gun, fired at some small birds, so near their residence that the charge broke the nursery windows, and some of the shot passed close to the head of the Princess, then in the arms of her nurse. The delinquent was seized, but his Royal Highness with characteristic kindness of heart, permitted him to go at large, upon a promise of not again indulging in such pursuits so recklessly.

CHAPTER XIX.

[1820.]

DISTURBED STATE OF SOCIETY AT THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE YEAR — TACTICS OF THE OPPOSITION — EMBARRASSMENTS OF HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS THE DUKE OF KENT—HIS UNEXPECTED DEATH—DEMISE OF GEORGE THE THIRD—MISREPRESENTATIONS AND MISTAKES RESPECTING HIS CHARACTER AND REIGN — HIS PRE-EMINENCE AS A SOVEREIGN, AND NATIONAL CHARACTERISTICS — ASPECT OF AFFAIRS AT HIS DEATH — THE GOVERNMENT — FUNERAL OF GEORGE THE THIRD—TERMINATION OF THE REGENCY.

CHAPTER XIX.

NOTHING could be more gloomy than the state of the public mind, at the commencement of the year—a year pregnant with terrible evils. An organized conspiracy against property, existed in various parts of the kingdom. Notwithstanding the measures taken by Government to bring the chief criminals to punishment; their trial was deferred till March, and in the interval, they were indefatigable in their endeavours to evade justice, and to stir up disaffection and violence wherever their influence could be made to extend. So deep was the terror, they and their emissaries excited in the neighbourhood of the late outbreak in Lancashire, that the witnesses for the prosecution dared not come forward, or acknowledge their adverse evidence, and in various parts of the country, an unruly mob made open demonstration of their lawless notions, by dancing round trees of liberty, and combining to defy the Government and outrage the laws. At this period, the armed force in the kingdom, in consequence of injudicious reductions, was quite inadequate to protect half the districts so menaced, and the civil power was in general insignificant in character, and quite incapable of producing much moral effect. This added to the open or secret countenance given to the movement by some persons holding a higher position in society, made the well-disposed inclined to despair for the cause of loyalty and order.

The tactics of the Opposition, at this crisis, excited a suspicion that they intended turning out the Administration, with the assistance of Orator Hunt, and his unruly supporters, and then to take the government into their own hands. What they were to do with their Radical coadjutors in case of success, does not appear—but what such persons would have done with them, was plain to any one but themselves. The revolutionary emblem that surrounded their banners—their levelling cries and deadly aspirations, pointed to the destruction of respectability, and to universal plunder; and with those startling lessons, showing the result of similar movements in the French Revolution and the Irish Rebellion, it is impossible to account for the blindness of persons of rank, property, and education, who permitted themselves to be quoted as the friends of the anarchists.

The Duke of Kent had become involved to a considerable extent, not from extravagance, but principally, as was stated, in consequence of heavy losses sustained when Governor of Gibraltar, from new regulations respecting wine-houses, and wine drunk in the garrison; and in 1815, the embarrassments of his Royal Highness forced him to make an appeal to the Prince Regent, which however was unsuccessful; Lord Liverpool having returned an answer that the Prince Regent regretted he had not the means at his disposal, for granting the relief required. The position of his Royal Highness not improving, he resolved, in 1819, to sell his favourite villa, at Castle Hill near Great Ealing, to obtain the means of relieving himself from his difficulties. The friends of the Duke, then published a statement of his case, containing all the documents at length,[1] which at least proved, that his Royal Highness ought to have had the same allowance as the Duke of Clarence, who had received, since he had attained the age of 24, no less than £238,000 more than his brother. The Duke of Kent considered that he was treated with harshness, and having the first instalment of a young family to provide for, in accordance with his rank, felt more strongly the annoyances of his position.

His Royal Highness with the Duchess, the Princess, and a small establishment, were living at Weymouth during the winter of 1819—20, when the Duke having taken a long morning walk, in unfavourable weather, on his return imprudently remained in his wet boots. He was seized with feverish symptoms on the 20th of January, and though most assiduously nursed by his affectionate Duchess, and carefully watched by his medical attendants, died on thc 23rd—a loss to the family of his Royal Highness, as severe as it was sudden; for a better father, and husband could not have been found in Royal Circles. The loss was only in degree less to the nation, for notwithstanding his inadequate resources, the benevolence of his disposition appeared to know neither check nor limit.

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[1] "A detailed Statement of the Case of His Royal Highness the Duke of Kent."

The Duke had seen a good deal of military service, in North America, where he rose to the rank of Commander-in-chief, in 1799. He was, subsequently, in 1802, appointed Governor-in-chief of that important fortress, Gibraltar, and became a Field Marshal in 1805.

It was while endeavouring to cure that gangrene in the British service, drunkenness, his Royal Highness raised a clamour among the garrison of Gibraltar, that occasioned his recal to England in May, 1803. The licentiousness and dissipation, fostered by the numerous wine-houses, he found no less prejudicial to the discipline, than to the health of the troops, under his command; but the British soldier is not easily broken of a habit of indulging in excess in intoxicating liquors, however nearly it menaces his existence, and however completely it destroys his morals, as our great General discovered to his sorrow in the Peninsula, and as other officers found to their deep regret, in the Crimea. The Duke of Kent boldly strove to stop the evil, by suppressing the cause; but this created such an amount of ill feeling, towards their Commander, by the garrison, that the Government were obliged to acquiese in his removal.

The deep sorrow, which the death of his Royal Highness created, in all who enjoyed the honour of his acquaintance, was at its height, when another demise in the Royal family, was announced. The nation though, more prepared for this affliction, were not less sensible of it, for it was their venerable monarch, George the Third—he breathed his last, in the arms of the Duke of York, on the 29th of January. The sympathy which his melancholy condition, had so powerfully excited among his loyal and affectionate subjects, of all classes, at the announcement of his decease, was demonstrated by a grief, as sincere as it was general.

At the advanced age of 82, and after a prolonged reign of 60 years, died George the Third. Although it seems a fashion, with a certain class of historical writers, to deny his capacity, as strongly as they decry his rule, it would not be a difficult matter to prove, that he was both one of the wisest, and the best of English Sovereigns. The only one of his royal ancestors, who could be compared with him in intelligence, is the Anglo-Saxon Alfred, and the evidence of his attainments, is much too shadowy to be brought into comparison with the numerous incontrovertible proofs, that present themselves, of those possessed by his descendant. As for moral excellence, there cannot be a question of his pre-eminence. Indeed, the comparison might fearlessly be carried into a wider field, and challenge the Royal and Imperial dynasties, of Europe.

Were we to look closely into the pretensions of those monarchs, whose names bear such distinguishing affixes, as *the great, the good, the pious, the wise*, &c. &c. the hollowness of their pretensions to such titles, would soon be discovered. George the Third was not great in that greatness assigned to the military Infidel of Prussia, the selfish voluptuary of France, or the illiterate drunkard of Russia;[1] nor was his excellence, his religion, or his wisdom, after the fashion of certain nearly worthless, anything but Christian, and very far from intellectual specimens of Royalty, whose names have descended to posterity, with the high recommendations we have named. George the Third was superior to any, and all of these worthies. He was sincere, he was just, he was benevolent; he was pious in his conduct, rather than in his professions; he was wiser in his life, than in his speech. He has been stigmatized as a bigot, in the face of his notorious toleration of each shade of opinion; he has been denounced as obstinate, notwithstanding the numerous instances in which he surrendered his judgment to the representations of his counsellors.

Considering the peculiar education he received, and the particular circumstances by which he was always surrounded, it is wonderful how free was his mind from narrow prejudices, and selfish prepossessions. He was thoroughly English in sentiment, in conduct and in feeling; and what have since been regarded as faults—

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[1] Frederick the Great, Louis XIV., and Peter the Great.

almost as crimes — were characteristics which he shared with a large majority of his people. He put forward no pretensions to genius—other minds have existed much more comprehensive in their scope—but what he wrote, and what he did, invariably displayed qualities which rarely accompany the most brilliant intellect—*good feeling, good sense, and honesty of purpose.*

It is unfair to condemn him for thinking as he sometimes thought, and deciding as he occasionally decided. George the Third saw according to the light vouchsafed to him. A great number of the King's letters have passed through our hands; but in all, there is evidence of considerateness where the feelings of others are in question, and of conscientiousness where the writer felt his own responsibility. Even that remarkable correspondence, which has lately been brought before the public[1] equally abounds with genuine, honest, hearty sentiment. That he felt strongly when he considered that his confidence had been abused, is a proof of the naturalness of his character, and that the conventional majesty of the sovereign, did not stifle the sensibility of the man. And we fearlessly maintain that such illustrations of life are infinitely more to be relied on than volumes of courtly phraseology, describing perfection under the imposing garniture of ermine and embroidery, the sceptre and the crown. It should always be borne in mind, that George the Third belongs to the last age, rather than to the present; but could the more intellectual nineteenth century claim him, even with his old fashioned virtues, he would bear comparison with any of the monarchs of the Continent who have reigned since his demise, under advantages to him entirely unknown.

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[1] Lord Brougham's "Statesmen of the Reign of George III." New edition.

Two more letters, written at this period, by the accomplished statesman, who has contributed so liberally to these pages, will close this Correspondence. It will be seen, that the Corn Question still excited the attention of politicians. Lord Grenville thought strongly on this subject, and as it is evident, wrote strongly. The communication is interesting for the opening it affords at the conclusion, for speculation, arising out of the King's death: the position of the Government was, however, even more embarrassing than is here intimated.

LORD GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

Dropmore, January 30, 1820.

It would require a volume to tell you all I think about the Corn Law; but surely its promoters might rest satisfied with the mischief they have already done. Our Buckinghamshire farmers, however, know no better, and are entitled to regard and kindness from us, even when they are most wrong.

I trust, that independently of the warehousing clause, the facility of importing corn so much cheaper from Ireland, and the power of buying potatoes and meal at their natural prices, will for a very long time to come be sufficient to defeat the detestable project of keeping up the price of corn to be never lower than eighty shillings, and as much higher as dearth and bad farming could carry it.

But if it were true, that the success of that attempt is now frustrated only by the warehousing clause, I could draw no other conclusion from that fact but this, namely, that it is owing to this clause, if it does so operate, that the whole country is not at this very hour, suffering a degree of distress and misery little short of absolute famine; for such must evidently be the state of the country, if while all other articles are allowed to fall in price, consequent on the rise in the value of money from the restoration of cash payments, corn alone could be kept up to, or above its former nominal price.

I am afraid that this, which our wise agriculturists complain of, as the evil of that clause, does in truth ascribe to it a merit much beyond what it is at all entitled to; but while there is a possibility of its having that effect, I never would part with it so long as the system itself is suffered to disgrace our statute book.

A moderate tax on foreign corn, not *ad valorem*, but a fixed sum per quarter, is a proposition which might be listened to, if the rest of the system were abolished, and it would have the plea, not perhaps a very sound one, of countervailing the small part of our great taxation, which does really fall on the producer, and not on the consumer of corn. But this is too reasonable a proposal to enter into the minds of our agriculturists; what they want, and what indeed they must have, in order to effect their object, is a scale of prohibitory duty, high enough to give them a monopoly of the food of their fellow-subjects; and when they have got it, the farmers would be as much surprised as ever, to find that the profit of this monopoly accrued exclusively to their landlords, and did not in the least assist themselves.

So much for the Corn Law. You will hear, long before you get this letter, of the King's death. I have nothing to do, thank Heaven, in the bustle, and shall not go to town till forced there by the Oxford Address.

The report is, that Parliament is to be dissolved as soon as the Mutiny Bill can be passed. If that be the plan, what a *gaucherie* it is, not to have passed it before Christmas. But I do not well understand how the Civil List is to be left for six weeks or two months to shift for itself. Yet that involves most difficult questions about allowances to Queens, &c.

The aspect of affairs had not improved, when at an interval of four-and-twenty hours, the writer again addressed his correspondent. He was consistent in his refusal to undertake again the responsibilities of office; but familiar as he was with his kinsman's capacity, he was anxious that the Marquis should embrace any opportunity which might present itself, of entering upon a public career.

LORD GRENVILLE TO THE MARQUIS OF BUCKINGHAM.

January 31, 1820.

I have nothing whatever to do in all the bustle of this new scene, and shall stay here till I go up with the Oxford Address, which, I conclude, will not be received till after the funeral. That ceremony is, indeed, itself an additional reason for my not changing my quarters, as it is very likely that my attendance there will be required, as it has been on the two last occasions, and certainly I should not (nor indeed could I), think of declining to pay this last duty, if I am one of those named for it.

I say all this because you ask me about my own notions, but I cannot see why they should be of any weight in determining yours; you being, as I trust, in the situation of having before you many years of active and useful duty. I know nothing but from general language, which my brother picked up two days ago, as to the intentions of the Government. If they are wise, they will dissolve as soon as they can, but whether that shall include, or exclude the passing of a new Civil List Bill, depends, I think on considerations of too high a nature for a country gentleman to speculate upon; and for which even those who are to decide upon them, are not as well prepared as one should have expected that they could be. Two or three days will make this clear enough to you, and I take it for granted, that if there is any appearance of business, especially such business preceding the dissolution, you will not think you can be absent from it.

On the 30th of January, the members of the Cabinet, who happened to be in town, resigned their credentials of office to Lord Sidmouth, who as Secretary to the Home Department, delivered them shortly afterwards in an audience with the new sovereign, at the same time, the Lord Chancellor surrendered the Great Seal; but every Minister was immediately reinstated in his office. There was no change: the Government was the same Government—the same members, and the same head. The title of Regent was the only removal.

The presence of the Marquis of Buckingham, and Lord Grenville, was required to assist in doing honour to their deceased master, as they had recently assisted in paying the last honours to his illustrious Consort. The Marquis was again one of the supporters, to the Chief Mourner—now no longer Regent, but King; and Lord Grenville bore the Union Banner, in the funeral procession—a stately and imposing ceremony, that produced a powerful impression upon the throngs of saddened spectators, permitted to gaze upon it, as it proceeded to the Royal vault. Nothing was omitted in the ceremonial, that could help to express the national sense of the dignity of their departed monarch, or the sorrow of his subjects, and servants, at the loss they had sustained.

CHAPTER XX.

GREAT HISTORICAL IMPORTANCE OF THE PERIOD OF THE REGENCY — STATE OF THE GOVERNMENT AT ITS COMMENCEMENT — ADVANTAGES PRODUCED BY A REMODELLING OF THE MINISTRY — COMMERCIAL AND INTELLECTUAL PROGRESS—THE PRINCE REGENT'S PATRONAGE OF ART AND SCIENCE—HIS IMPROVEMENT IN STREET ARCHITECTURE — SOCIAL ADVANCEMENT—BENEFITS CONFERRED BY THE LEGISLATURE—BRIGHTON AND THE PAVILION—MR. WILBERFORCE ENTERTAINED BY THE PRINCE — GENEROUS INTERPOSITION OF HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS IN BEHALF OF MR. JEKYLL.

CHAPTER XX.

UPON looking back throughout the period of the Regency, it is scarcely possible to exaggerate its importance as a portion of the modern history of the country: this is immediately apparent when we proceed to contrast the position of the Empire at the commencement, and at the conclusion. Even the wisest of English statesmen seemed inclined to despair of its future, so comprehensive were the difficulties, so menacing the dangers, with which, in the first instance, it was surrounded. We appeared to have exhausted our material resources in a long war with the most formidable enemy that ever threatened our shores. On the sea, we had certainly succeeded in establishing a dominion, that closely confined hostile fleets to the protection of impregnable ports; but by land our own successes were confined to one brilliant conflict in Italy (Maida), and some questionable advantages in the Peninsula, where we had inaugurated our military interposition by a terrible disaster, (the retreat of Sir John Moore,) and a miserable specimen of blundering, (the Convention of Cintra,) and where our small force was dreadfully outnumbered by our enemy, who had apparently inexhaustible supplies of every kind at hand, and the most skilful generals, waiting at the head of different armies composed of the finest troops in the world, to take advantage of our weakness, and mistakes. In the Continent, the Emperor Napoleon appeared to have consolidated his supremacy, in spite of our lavish efforts to create combinations against the further development of his ambition. His extraordinary military genius had triumphed over the famous system of the Great Frederick, and equally prostrated the more extensive resources of the Imperial House of Hapsburg; and so complete and numerous had been his victories against European armies of every description, that there was scarcely a power of any importance that did not secretly dread, or openly acknowledge his domination—apprehensive of the fate of the many important states that had already been absorbed into, or had become dependant upon his ever-spreading Government.

Apparently, there was no statesman in England, on whom, by the general voice, might descend the mantle of that illustrious patriot, whose name and policy were so closely identified with opposition to the attacks of this inveterate and vigilant foe; for party prejudices, and political rivalry, had so obscured the reputation of public men of undoubted ability, that their countrymen had either become insensible of their claims to pre-eminence, or they had been placed in a position which prevented their legitimate influence. When the Regent entered upon his office, it is scarcely possible to pronounce with accuracy, which was most incapable of successful action, as then constituted—the Government, or the Opposition. The former was threatened with dismemberment, by internal rivalries and jealousies—the latter rendered equally weak in its co-operative power, by separate interests, and conflicting opinions. Most of the principal offices in the Cabinet were filled by men of moderate administrative capacity, with one man of high reputation, and superior intellect, dissatisfied with his colleagues, and his own position. Their opponents were scarcely in a better position; for the moderate men were shackled by association with the advocates of extreme opinions, and could not conscientiously accept office, without providing for, or being influenced by supporters, whose ideas they considered dangerous.

The Prince Regent seems, in the first instance, to have sought an amalgamation of the best materials of either party; but the leaders of Opposition distrusting his sincerity, and the influential members of the Cabinet being indisposed to such a coalition, the repeated efforts of his Royal Highness ended in failure. It is not improbable that, had Lord Grenville accepted the proposals that were offered by the Prince, the influence of his integrity and talents must have, sooner or later, placed him at the head of the Government, where, under any circumstances, it is doubtful whether he could have found himself in a more false position than he subsequently held, as the nominal leader of an Opposition, to the principal objects of which he was quite as much opposed, as to the most objectionable proceedings of the Ministry.

Convinced of the impracticability of uniting such irreconcileable elements, the Prince, at last, had recourse to a reconstruction of the Cabinet, out of the materials of the Party it may be said to have represented. Very little was required for the desired change, beyond the getting rid of the chief source of the jealousies that had hitherto weakened the Administration. Though this was done at the expense of much acknowledged talent, by allowing fair scope for merit that had not been acknowledged, not only was there no administrative loss, but the cordial feeling that took the place of most hostile rivalry, so encouraged its development, that, henceforth, the dangers and difficulties of the country gradually, but surely, disappeared; important advantages followed in quick succession; a skilful use was made of an intricate entanglement of continental affairs, which enabled an able Minister to effect new combinations; and these were handled with such consummate tact, that when the Regency had lasted but a few years, the Empire of the modern Cæsar had collapsed to its original dimensions, the enslaved kingdoms had reclaimed their lost independence, the fame of England's triumphant army had equalled that of her glorious navy; and the conqueror of the fairest portion of Europe, the enemy of England, and the disturber of the peace of the world, had become a captive in the distant island of St. Helena.

If such had been the sole events of the Regency, they would have sufficed to mark it as memorable for all time to come; but there were achievements of peace as well as of war; conquests of commerce as well as of arms; triumphs of science, art and literature, more profitable than all the advantages secured by arms or diplomacy. Our trade and manufactures, notwithstanding Napoleon's prohibitory decrees, underwent a wonderful expansion. During ten years of war, from 1803 to 1812 inclusive, the average exports had amounted to £42,145,000, against the previous nine years, exports amounting to £30,760,000; while those of the seven years of peace, from 1814 to 1820 inclusive, reached the sum of £53,922,000. Equally remarkable was the progress of intelligence, as exemplified in the labours of Sir Humphrey Davy, Doctor Wollaston, Professor Playfair, Sir William Herschel, and Dugald Stewart, in Science: Sir Thomas Lawrence, Chantrey, Constable, Hilton, Stothard, Flaxman, Wilkie, and Northcote, in Art; Lord Byron, Sir Walter Scott, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Sheridan, Southey, Moore, and Gifford, in Literature: among many others of minor note. One important movement in this direction, was the impulse given to education, by the increase of National, and the establishment of Infant Schools; while the attention directed towards a higher system of instruction, begun to have a visible effect upon our public Schools and Colleges. Great intellectual advantages have been secured to us since then, but it must not be forgotten, that they had their rise in the period to which we are referring.

The Prince Regent took a deep interest in the advancement of intelligence, and was never insensible to the claims of mental superiority—men of letters, found him a cordial friend, and he was a liberal patron to artists of talent. Indeed, a large share of the pecuniary obligations he incurred, went to form a gallery of paintings,[1] and pay for rather comprehensive experiments in architecture. He not only created a choice collection of cabinet pictures, but his example diffused a taste for painting, among the nobility and gentry, to which we may trace that refined artistic feeling, which has since become general among the wealthy and the educated. Equally did his Royal Highness's taste for building, encourage architects, while it effected a complete revolution in our metropolis, turning a considerable district, long regarded as unsightly and inconvenient, into the most picturesque portion of its immense expanse of bricks and mortar.

Whatever this vast city may boast in the way of street improvement, in more pleasing façades, increased domestic accommodation, better ventilation, and similar advantages, date from the destruction of the wretched dwellings of Swallow Street, and the draining of the stagnant ponds in Mary-le-bone Fields. The Prince Regent was, unquestionably, a great reformer of our thoroughfares—and the prodigious piles of building which have been added to the London of his time, as well as the fairest portions of the old town, according to the familiar inscription, "widened at the expense of the Corporation," are undeniable proofs of the extent and value of the reformation, commenced under his auspices. When we have realized all the improvements that must arise out of that movement, in more commodious habitations for the humbler citizens, the abolition of smoke and other nuisances, and a better system of sewerage for rich and poor, we shall then be able fully to appreciate the importance of this reform.

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[1] Chiefly of the Dutch school—now in Her Majesty's private collection at Buckingham Palace.

Towards the latter years of the Regency, a greater refinement of manner became perceptible in fashionable society. Music, painting, and the modern languages began to be more generally cultivated, and many sensible improvements became evident. Material prosperity affected important social reforms among the middling classes, who made an important advance in intelligence, wealth, and political influence. Ameliorations commenced, also, in the more humble industrious ranks, for whose benefit several enactments had passed the legislature, and numerous benevolent societies had been instituted. The progress of religion, during the same period, was not less encouraging. Even among the higher classes, the influence of such a man as Wilberforce, diffused itself widely; and true piety, in many instances, superseded frivolous folly, and glaring licentiousness. The more influential offices of the State were in the hands of noblemen of irreproachable morals, and their exemplary lives gave a tone to the brilliant circle to which they belonged. The Court participated largely in this improvement—faultless character exacted the homage which for some time had too openly been given to mere personal attractions, and the admirable wife found a higher appreciation in society, than had a few years previously been accorded to the fascinating "favourite."

Among the many benefits secured to the country by the Legislature during this period, may be mentioned the new silver coinage, (56 Geo. III. cap. 68), the law for securing the liberty of the subject, which empowers Judges to issue writs of *Habeas Corpus*, returnable to themselves at vacation, (cap. 100). The abolition of the pillory, except for perjury, and its subornation, (cap. 138); the abolition of the whipping of female offenders, (57 Geo. III. cap. 75); the Act for regulating the cost of distresses for small rents, (cap. 93). That for preventing frivolous actions of assault and slander; when damages are recorded under forty shillings, the costs are not to exceed that sum, (58 Geo. III. cap. 30). The Act for building additional churches in populous parishes, (cap. 45). The abolition of rewards on conviction of criminals, commonly called *blood-money*, (cap 70), and the appointment of Commissioners for inquiring into the management of public charities for the education of the poor, (cap. 91).

Among the important social improvements made by the Prince, we may regard the town of Brighton, which was quite as much a creation of the Regent, as the portion of London that bears his name. Before his Royal Highness selected it as a residence, it was an insignificant fishing village; his taste and enterprise gave there an impulse for building, which in due time transformed its huts into palaces, and its dirty thoroughfares into fine terraces, and elegant squares. All the attractions of architecture have since been lavished on the place, and the recommendation of fashion has insured for it every benefit that could be conferred on a marine resort, within a few hours distance of the metropolis.

The singular structure which the Prince selected for his own palace, may be open to critical animadversion, as bizarre in style; but as an experiment, it is quite as creditable as those extraordinary attempts at the Gothic, which Horace Walpole commenced at Strawberry Hill. Any change from the gloomy brick edifices which had so long ruled in street and villa, must have been an improvement; such an example, moreover, helped to expand the imagination of the architect, which shortly suggested those important changes in domestic and palatial building, that now adorn our principal cities and parks. Nor was the Pavilion without pretensions to the picturesque both interiorly and exteriorly.

This was the favourite residence of the Prince, and he lavished upon it all the resources of art. The most brilliant portion of fashionable society thronged its saloons, and a gay and talented circle assembled at its luxurious banquets. Very much, however, to his Royal Highness's credit, he did not invite only such guests as could contribute to the general entertainment; he looked out for men of moral worth and intellectual attainments;

for whom his welcome was quite as cordial, as that given to the most accomplished courtier, who ministered to his amusement. Wilberforce has presented some pleasing traits of this nature in the character of the Prince, that we cannot resist transferring.

"I at the Pavilion once. The Ministers have been down with the Prince for two or three days each. Lords Sidmouth and Bathurst called on me yesterday. Lord Castlereagh before. The Foreign Ministers there also. Lord St. Helen's and Carleton here. The Queen here about a week. The Pavilion in Chinese style, beautiful and tasty—though it looks," he adds, "very much as if St. Paul's had come down to the sea, and left behind a litter of cupolas. When there, the Prince and the Duke of Clarence, too, very civil. Prince showed he had read Cobbett. Spoke strongly of the blasphemy of his late papers, and most justly. I was asked again, last night and to-night, but declined, not being well."

This excuse, however, would not long serve, and three days afterwards, he was again at the Pavilion. "The Prince came up to me, and reminded me of my singing at the Duchess of Devonshire's ball in 1782, of the particular song, and of our first knowing each other." The reader should be reminded, that at the period to which his Royal Highness referred, his serious and earnest-minded guest was a gay young man of fashion, who not unusually "heard the chimes at midnight."

"We are both, I trust, much altered since, Sir," said the latter.

"Yes, the time which has gone by, must have made a great alteration in us."

"Something better, than that too, I trust Sir."

"He then asked me to dine with him the next day." adds Mr. Wilberforce, "assuring me that I should hear nothing in his house to give me pain—alluding to a rash expression of one of his train, when I declined the other day. "Mr. Wilberforce will not dine with you, Sir,"—that even if there should be at another time, there should not be [anything objectionable] when I was there."

Thus kindly assured, the invitation was, of course, accepted, and the Diarist continues—"At dinner, I sat between Lord Ellenborough and Sir James Graham. The Prince desired I might be brought forward. At night, in coming away, I opened to Bloomfield very civilly, as I am sure I ought, saying: I felt the Prince's kindness, but told him that it was inconvenient to me to come to the Pavilion often—children causâ. He at once said, 'I understand you.' When I next saw the Prince, he gave me a kind and general invitation. I heard afterwards, that Lord Ellenborough was asked to Pavilion expressly to meet me. I was glad to hear it, as indicating that I was deemed particular in my company."

"What misrepresentation of facts!" he then exclaims. "Stephen heard that the Prince's speech to me, when inviting me, intimated that if I came hereafter, I must take my chance; that commonly the talk was such as I should dislike to hear. *The direct contrary* *was the fact.* Several times in the ensuing weeks," adds his biographer, "he was again a guest at the Pavilion, and met always with the same treatment." "The Prince," Mr. Wilberforce cordially acknowledges, "Is quite the English gentleman, at the head of his own table."[1]

It is easy to multiply evidence of this nature to prove that the disposition of His Royal Highness, was very different from what it has sometimes been represented. Those who knew him best, and had frequent opportunities of observing his conduct, are warm in their praise of his kindly nature, and ready appreciation of moral and intellectual worth. Any claim upon him, if properly brought under his notice, was sure of being attended to. A singular instance is recorded of his devotion to the interests of a person to whom he considered himself under obligation. Mr. Jekyll, a descendant of the well known lawyer, Sir Joseph Jekyll, Master of the Rolls, was a barrister of considerable talent, but of limited practice: indeed he was one of the most brilliant of that accomplished circle that assembled at Carlton House and at the Pavilion; and his success in society was looked upon by his professional brethren, as fatal to his prospects at the bar. But among the many warm admirers of his talents and character was the Prince, the attractions of whose symposia had so often drawn him from his chambers; and his Royal Highness determined that his pleasant companion should not suffer as a lawyer for his distinction as a wit. In consequence, he took an early opportunity to express to the Lord Chancellor his wish that Jekyll should be made a Master in Chancery. This he found Lord Eldon anything but eager to gratify. The Chancellor entertained doubts that so fine a gentleman could be sufficiently informed in the dry details of Chancery practice—the Court of his Royal Highness not forming, in his opinion, the best preparation for his own; and he turned a deaf ear to the Prince's recommendations.

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[1] "Life of Wilberforce," by his Sons, Vol. IV., p. 277.

His Royal Highness was an applicant not to be easily got rid of; and finding that at Carlton House he gained no progress with the obdurate Chancellor, waiting his opportunity, he made his appearance unattended at his Lordship's private residence in Bedford Square. Upon the servant's going to the door, the Prince Regent observed that, as the Chancellor had the gout, he knew he must be at home, and therefore desired he might be shown up to his room. The domestics assured him that their master was too ill to be seen, and, on being urgently pressed for admittance, firmly but respectfully added that they had positive orders to admit *no one*. Then the Prince, nothing daunted, asked to be shown the staircase. This being done, he ascended, and stopped at every door, asking if Lord Eldon was there, till he found the right room, when he quickly opened the door, stepped in, and seated himself by the bedside of the astonished invalid.

The Prince at once made his business known. His friend Jekyll wanted to be a Master in Chancery, and an excellent Master he was sure Jekyll would make. The Lord Chancellor, however, persisted in thinking otherwise, and for a considerable period seemed quite intractable—listening quietly to the praises of Mr. Jekyll's earnest advocate, and then steadily refusing to appoint him.

At last, his Royal Highness, suddenly threw himself back in his chair, exclaiming, "how I do pity Lady Eldon."

"Good God!" exclaimed the Chancellor, "what is the matter?"

"Oh, nothing!" answered the Prince, "except that she never will see you again; for here I remain, until you promise to make Jekyll a Master in Chancery."

"Well," adds Lord Eldon, when narrating this anecdote, "I was obliged, at length, to give in—I could not help it." The appointment was made, and according to the Lord Chancellor's acknowledgment, "Jekyll got on capitally."[1]

The extraordinary perseverance of the Prince, till he triumphed over an apparently insurmountable obstacle to the advancement of his friend, is worthy of recognition. Equally admirable is the penetration, which made him guarantee Mr. Jekyll's qualifications for an office demanding great and peculiar ability. The new Master proved himself worthy of his patron, and shortly won the reluctant, but sincere approval, of his eminent legal superior. If the Prince had been the indolent and selfish voluptuary so often represented, he never could have taken a tithe of the trouble to serve another, evidenced in this proceeding, nor could he have exhibited any of that earnest warm-heartedness, which is its most pleasing. feature.

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[1] Twiss's "Life of Lord Chancellor Eldon," Vol. I., p. 533.

One of the most serious charges against him, is his abandonment of the Party with which he had been so long and intimately associated, soon after his entering upon the Regency. Some excuse for this may however, be alleged in the extreme opinions which some of its leaders had ventured to enunciate, that no doubt created considerable distrust. If he had succeeded in gaining the more moderate politicians, which appears to have been his object, a liberal policy might by degrees have been introduced into the Cabinet, but as this Correspondence has shown, they would neither agree to separation, nor accept office. His Royal Highness was, therefore, thrown upon those counsellors, who urged prudence, with every promise and profession most likely to insure attention to, and gain acceptance of their proposals. If ever the end justified the means, the wonderful elevation to which the empire was raised, from the greatest embarrassment and apprehension, ought to be the

Prince's justification. As it has been almost from the commencement of opposing political parties, the Prince, when in office, saw from a different point of view than when in opposition. In the latter, he appeared to look to what he might gain—in the former to what he might lose.

THE END.

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